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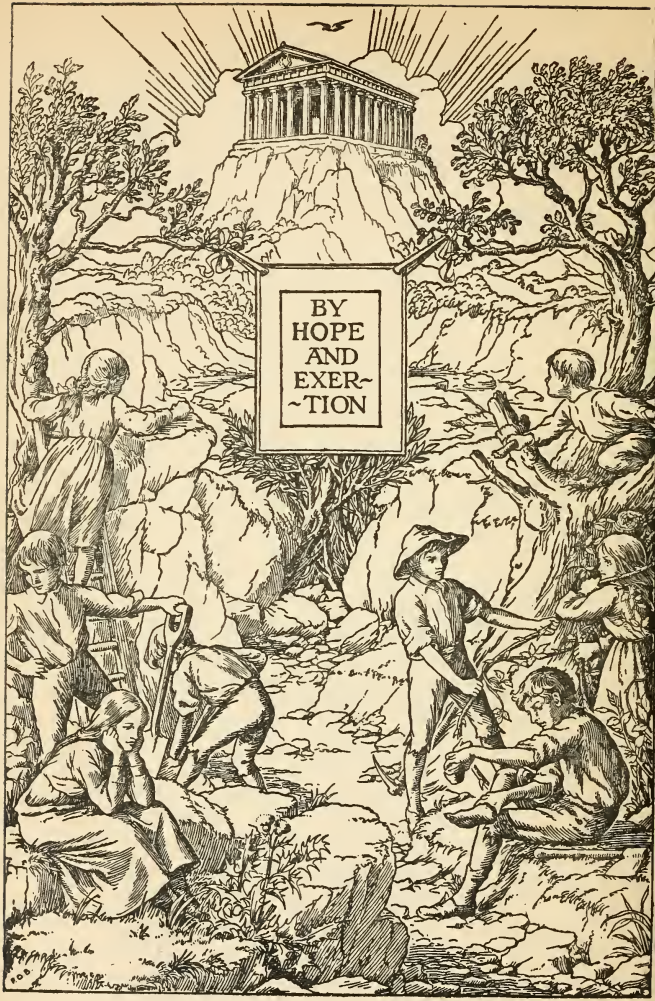
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WHEN THEY WERE CHILDREN

Stories of the Childhood of Famous Men and Women

BY

AMY STEEDMAN

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ABOUT THIS BOOK

THE world has many stately palaces and great cathedrals that tower in their loveliness high above the humble dwellings around them, and their beauty and wonder are the delight of our eyes. We look up at their high walls, their gilded roofs, their slender spires pointing to the sky; we admire the great strength and delicate tracery of their stonework, and whether in the sunshine or under the stars, they stand out as splendid monuments of what the mind of man has power to plan and his hands have skill to fashion.

But the foundations on which these buildings rest are hidden from our eyes, buried deep down in the darkness. Yet though unseen and seldom thought of, in every case there has been the patient laying of stone upon stone, without which the stately building could never have been reared.

It is much the same with the great lives which tower above the ordinary ones around us. Here and there we note them; we mark the noble deed, the courage, the heroism, the flash of genius, the habit of self-sacrifice, but we are apt to forget that all this did not come into being suddenly, that in each case there was a long time of preparation, a patient laying of foundations in the years of childhood, act by act, as stone is laid upon stone, before it was known what manner of life would be built up.

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So whenever it is possible it is well to consider the time of preparation as well as to admire the finished work, and we shall learn to know these great men and women all the better for hearing something of what they thought and did when they were children.

"Souls are built as temples are—
Sunken deep, unseen, unknown,
Lies the sure foundation stone;
Then the courses framed to bear
Lift the cloisters, pillared fair;
Last of all the airy spire,
Soaring Heavenward, higher and higher,
Nearest sun and nearest star."

AMY STEEDMAN.

TO

PETER

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WHEN THEY WERE CHILDREN

SAINT AUGUSTINE

THE story of S. Augustine's childhood is different from almost all other saint stories, because it is told to us in his own words. There are many beautiful lives of the saints written by people who tried to write them as truthfully as possible, but who could not be quite certain of every fact. That is why S. Augustine's own account is so real and so interesting.

He begins his story from the very beginning of his life, when he was a tiny baby. Not that he could remember as far back as that, but he watched other babies, and knew that he must have behaved exactly as they did.

It was in the little town of Tagaste, on the northern shore of Africa, that Augustine was born in the year of Our Lord 354. That little strip of coast with the sea on one side and the desert on the other had seen the martyrdom of Peptua and Cyprian when they laid down their lives for the faith, and Augustine might well be proud of his birthplace. His mother, Monica, was a noble lady, loved and honoured by all who knew her, whose heart was bound up in that one precious son of hers. Many were the dreams she dreamed of his future as she rocked him in her arms, but it was not of fame

or honours that she thought; the prayer that came from the depth of her heart was that her little son should live to be a faithful soldier and servant of the Master whom she served.

Like all other babies, Augustine began life by sleeping a good deal, crying a good deal, and then, after a while, breaking out into a smile occasionally. Next came a desire to make his wishes known, and as he could not yet talk, he babbled and waved his arms and kicked vigorously. Then if he did not get his own way, like all other babies, he lifted up his voice and wept.

Little by little he learned to walk and to talk, and after that came school.

"Next I was put to school to get learning," he writes, "in which I, poor wretch, knew not what use there was, and yet if idle I was beaten."

It was all very bewildering to a little boy. Why should he be forced to learn things which he did not understand and had not the least desire to know? Those whippings hurt sorely, but they did not explain matters at all.

It was the thought of the whippings that made Augustine say his first real prayer to God. "So I began as a boy to pray to Thee, though but a small boy, yet with no small earnestness, that I might not be beaten at school."

He was a thorough boy, eager for games and all sorts of mischief, hating to be forced to stay indoors and learn dull, wearisome lessons, and becoming idle and listless when he ought to have been attending to his work. So of course a whipping followed, and with a little sore body he crept away and sobbed out the prayer from his little sore soul.

He did not understand how it could all be meant for his good. We never quite understand that until school-days are left far behind.

As the boy grew older, although he still hated to be made to learn his lessons, he began to be more interested in them, and even to love the ones that had stories in them.

"Latin I loved, not indeed reading, writing, and arithmetic, but the story of Virgil. . . . Why, then, did I hate the Greek Classics? For Homer cunningly wove the like fictions, and is most sweetly vain, yet was he little to my boyish taste. And so, I suppose, would Virgil be to Grecian children. The difficulty of a foreign tongue dashed all the sweetness of Grecian fable. Latin I learned without fear and suffering, amidst the caresses of my nursery and jests of friends, smiling and sportively encouraging me."

It does not need much patience and perseverance to learn our native tongue, and Augustine possessed very little patience and scarcely any perseverance at all.

Which of us if we sat down to write out a list of our faults would feel inclined to mention the little mean sins which no one but ourselves knows anything about? It is so much easier to talk about the big faults that sound rather grand, but no one cares to own up to little mean underhand ways. Yet it is those little mean sins which the great Saint acknowledges when he writes down in his *Confessions* the story of his childhood.

He was not always quite straight and fair in games, he says. Sometimes in his eagerness to be first, and when no one noticed, he cheated just a very little, but

enough to win the game. That was bad enough, but if he found anyone else doing something which he considered not strictly fair he was furiously angry, and talked fiercely about the meanness of cheating. He was fond of showing off, too, and would pretend to be much worse than he really was, just to win the foolish admiration of his companions. There is no doubt that Augustine was a very human little boy.

He tells us that in a garden near his house there was a pear-tree covered with pears which were neither sweet nor large. But just because they belonged to someone else he thought it fun to steal them, and he and his companions went out one dark night and robbed the tree of all its fruit. They did not care to eat the pears, and, after tasting one or two, threw the rest away to the pigs. There was no particular pleasure, he allows, in doing this, and he would never have done it alone, but he wanted the other boys to think how bold and bad he was, and that he was afraid of nothing.

All this scarcely seems as if it could be the account of the childhood of a Saint, and yet there was always something saintlike surrounding him, something of which he took no heed, but which never failed him—his mother's love and her earnest prayers.

She used to weep, he says, but he took no notice of her tears, counting them womanish and having no desire to mend his ways. But God counted those tears, every one, and He listened to those prayers. Augustine wandered away, like the prodigal in the parable, into the far country of folly and sin, but his mother's prayers were like a golden thread follow-

ing him wherever he strayed, leading him at last back to God. In God's good time those prayers were answered, and the wild boy, so full of faults and sins, became one of the purest and noblest of His Saints.

S. LOUIS OF FRANCE

THE great bell of the Castle of Poissy was ringing out its solemn call to the service of God on S. Mark's Day in the year 1214, when the news was announced that a prince had just been born within the castle, and that the ringing of the bell must be stopped.

The great bell had swung backwards and forwards, and its call had echoed through the castle and throbbed its way through the low tower room where the mother lay resting with her new-born son by her side.

There could be little rest for the Princess Blanche while that bell rang out its message, but the moment it was stopped she missed the sound, and seemed unhappy that it should have been silenced for her sake. The call to God's service must not cease; she would rather that she and her little son should be moved to some outside place where the sound could not reach them. The bell must ring on, and the princess with the new-born baby might be taken to the poor shelter of "The Lady's Barn" outside the castle.

So, at the very beginning of his little life S. Louis of France, the baby born on the feast-day of S. Mark, began to endure hardship in God's service. True, it mattered little to him whether he was sheltered in a castle or a barn, so long as he lay warm and safe in his nurse's arms, just as our dear Lord Himself could have felt no earthly need in that poor stable home, so

long as His mother's arms were round Him, and she wrapped Him from the cold. But even so, it was fitting that the prince who was to strive so earnestly to follow in the footsteps of his Master should begin life in the same humble fashion.

There was no great stir at the court when this new prince was born, for he was not the eldest son. His brother Philip, now five years old, was heir to the crown of France, and the new baby was considered of so little importance that even the exact date of his birth seems to have been forgotten. But although there is some uncertainty about the year of his birth, it is quite certain that he was born on S. Mark's Day.

The christening of the little prince was a very quiet affair, with no pomp or ceremony. He was given his name of Louis in the Collegiate Church of Poissy, and there at the font the cross was traced on his brow, and he was enrolled in the service of the King of Saints, whom he was so faithfully to serve.

In after years the Saint King always spoke of the Church of Poissy as the place where he received the greatest honour of his life. When he said that, his friends looked puzzled, and wondered if he did not mean the Cathedral at Rheims, where the crown had been placed upon his head; but seeing their perplexity, the King would smile, and explain that it was not the crown of which he boasted, but "the cross they laid upon my brow at Poissy."

The first years of Louis' life were full of sunshine and unclouded happiness.

There were several children in the royal nursery, so they played their games together, got into mischief, and enjoyed thrilling adventures, as only boys can do.

The fair-haired, blue-eyed Louis was as merry as any of them, and nothing ever appeared to cloud his sunny temper. He seemed to carry a charm about with him, and wherever he went the sunshine of happiness went with him.

Neither he nor any other of the royal children ran any danger of being spoilt or over-indulged. They had a mother of so strong a character that they quickly learned their first lesson of obedience from her, and she was so wonderfully good and wise that her rule, though strict, was the best preparation the young princes could have had for fighting the good fight in all the storms and trials that awaited them.

It was while Philip and Louis were still little boys that some misfortune befell their father when he was away in England, and he sent to the children's grandfather, Philip II, asking for help.

Now Philip II was a very strong and determined old man, and he was angry with his son for getting into difficulties.

"By the lance of S. James," he cried, "I will do nothing to help him."

That was all very well, but he forgot that Blanche, his daughter-in-law, had quite as strong a will as his, and was quite as determined.

"Will you do nothing to help your son?" she asked. "Will you let him die in a foreign land?"

"Of a surety," said the King, "I will do nothing to help him."

"In God's name, then, I know what I will do," said Blanche. "I have two fair children, and I will pawn them that I may have money to supply my husband's needs."

But, after all, the fair children were not pawned, for of course the King was obliged to give in, and Blanche had her way.

This was the mother who trained up the little Saint in his childhood, and "taught him to believe in God and to love and fear Him in his youth."

The first cloud that overshadowed the clear sky of Louis' happy childhood was the death of his brother Philip. It was sad and bewildering to lose his special playmate, and he was too young to understand those beautiful words which his father and mother had written over the tomb of their first-born son in Notre Dame, "Death hath kept him from being a king on earth that he might be a king in heaven."

Another death followed soon afterwards. The children's grandfather, King Philip II, passed away, and their father became Louis VIII. All this made little Louis a person of some importance, for he was heir-apparent now.

The children went to the Cathedral of Rheims to be present at their father's coronation, and they must have thoroughly enjoyed all the excitement of the brilliant scene. As they rode back to Paris the way was strewn with flowers, and when the gay company reached the city gates they were met by welcoming crowds bringing gifts for the newly-crowned King; while inside the city the streets were hung with carpets and tapestry, and there was rejoicing everywhere.

It was but a glimpse of the gay world which the children caught after all, for they speedily went back to the schoolroom and nursery. Lessons and rules grew harder as the boys grew older, and if it had not

been that Louis had such a sunny, sweet temper there might have been serious trouble at times. It is said that his tutor believed in the old saying, "Spare the rod, and spoil the child," and he certainly did his best to prevent Louis from being spoilt in that way, for he whipped him every day just in case he should do anything to deserve it. The boy accepted the discipline quite cheerfully, however, and nothing seemed to spoil his temper or make him sullen. Everyone loved him, servants and friends alike, and he was always ready to do a kindness to anyone who needed his help.

The children saw little of their father, for he had ridden away to the wars soon after his coronation; but, after three years of waiting, Queen Blanche set out one day with her children to welcome back her dearly-loved lord.

It was a dull November day when she started, and Louis rode by the side of the carriage, full of eager excitement at the thought of seeing his father again.

As they galloped along the muddy road a company of soldiers came riding to meet them, and the Queen looked anxiously out, for they rode slowly, as those who bear ill news.

It was ill news indeed that was coming to meet the brave Queen. Louis VIII was dead. The little fair-haired boy who rode by his mother's side was now King Louis IX.

"Would to God that I could die too!" was the cry of the poor Queen when the messenger told his tale. That was her first thought, but afterwards she knew that now of all times she must needs be strong and brave,

for France and her young son needed all the help she could give. There were enemies on every side ready to snatch his inheritance from the boy. It would need all her wisdom and courage to defend the right.

Louis was twelve years old when this great responsibility was laid upon his shoulders. In a moment his childhood vanished, and the battle of life began.

First of all, it was necessary that the young soldier should receive his knighthood, and to Louis each part of that ceremony was full of deepest meaning. There was the bathing, that washing which signified the washing away of sin; then the putting on of the snow-white shirt, which meant that the young knight's body should be kept pure. Afterwards came the crimson robe, the colour of a true knight's blood, which he must pour out "to serve and honour God and guard Holy Church." His long brown stockings spoke of the brown earth from whence he had come, and to which he would return; and the white girdle was an emblem of purity and self-denial; while the two golden spurs were tokens of the obedience and eagerness he must show in God's service. Then as he knelt in his new armour before the altar the young knight received his sword, the sword which he was to wield in defence of the Christian faith.

All night long in the great Cathedral of Rheims the boy knelt, keeping watch before the altar, where the next day he was to be crowned King of France. Not a sound echoed through the dim aisles, scarce a gleam of light lifted the heavy shadows that closed in upon that kneeling figure. The fair head was bowed; the boy's soul was uplifted in prayer that God would accept his

service. Surely the white-robed angels kept watch that night; the cloud of Witnesses must have hovered close around the kneeling boy, who in the years to come was to show the world how a true knight and a noble king could also be a Saint of God.

GIOTTO

FOURTEEN miles from the city of Florence, up among the olive-yards and vineyards of Tuscany, the little hamlet of Vespignano nestled in the hollow of the hills, looking down through the blue mists to the domes and towers of the fair City of Flowers. It was a simple little village, and the people who lived there were simple, honest, hard-working country folk, who spent their days in tending their olive-trees and vines and keeping watch over their sheep, like the shepherds of old.

From time to time echoes of the city life reached the distant village, and to the people of Vespignano Florence seemed the centre of the world where the most wonderful things were always happening.

In one of the small sun-baked houses of the village there lived a husbandman called Bondone, and it was here in 1270 that his little son was born, to whom he gave the name of Giotto.

Life was hard and rough in that country home, but the peasant baby grew into a strong hardy boy, learning early what cold and hunger meant. His father was sure that even in the wonderful city there could not be found a cleverer, brighter boy than his. The neighbours, too, were all fond of the brown-eyed, bright-faced boy, and were proud of his quickness and clever ways.

All through the long summer days Giotto played

about in the sunshine, as wild and free as the little green lizards that darted about on the sunny walls; and when the bitter winds blew, and winter drove him indoors, he was happy enough nestling in the corner close to the big wood fire, roasting chestnuts, or playing with the treasures which filled his pockets, gathered on the hillside in the sunny summer days.

There were no picture books in these days; indeed there were few books of any sort, and Giotto had never seen a picture in all his life. He had heard of one, though, and it may be that he often dreamed of it as he sat looking into the red heart of the fire.

News had come one day from Florence that a most important event had happened there. The great artist called Cimabue had been painting a picture in his studio outside the Porto S. Piero, and everyone had been on tiptoe of curiosity to know what it was like. No one, however, had even caught a glimpse of it, until the day when Charles of Anjou, King of Naples, happened to be passing through Florence, and, hearing of the picture, desired to see it.

All the townsfolk crowded after him as he made his way to the studio, and as many as could edged their way in with him to gaze on the wonderful painting.

It was a marvel of beauty, so they said, and nothing else was talked of; while those who had not seen it could only wait patiently until it should be finished. When at last it was taken from the studio and carried in triumph through the streets to the Church of Santa Maria Novella, the whole city went wild with delight. Never before had they seen such a Madonna and Child, never before had anyone painted such angels of light.

The first feeling as they gazed was one of awe and reverence, but then a great shout of joy went up and swept like a wave through the streets as the picture was carried along. Ever after that part of the city was called by a new name, the Borgo Allegri, or the Glad Quarter.

> "A noble picture! worthy of the shout,
> Wherewith along the streets the people bore
> Its cherub-faces, which the sun threw out,
> Until they stooped, and entered the church door."

There can be no doubt that the boy Giotto heard about that wonderful picture, and perhaps listened more eagerly to the news than anyone else in the village.

For Giotto dreamed a great many dreams about pictures, and he thought that a man that could paint a picture like that must be the happiest man in all the world. There was nothing he himself loved so well as to scratch lines upon a smooth rock, trying to draw the shape of the things he saw around him. They could not be called pictures, for he had no pencils and no paper, but it did not matter much to him; he was quite happy with a piece of sharpened flint and any smooth surface to draw upon.

There was plenty of time, too, for drawing out on the hillside, for since he was now ten years old he was put in charge of his father's sheep, and spent the long summer days watching lest they should stray too far afield.

Out there under the blue sky his eyes made pictures for him out of the fleecy white clouds as they slowly changed from one form to another. He learned to

know exactly the shape of each flower, and how it grew. He noticed how the olive-trees laid their silver leaves against the blue background of the sky, and how his sheep looked when they stooped to eat or lay in the shadow of a rock.

Nothing escaped his keen, watchful eyes, and then with eager hands he would sharpen a piece of flint, choose out the smoothest rock, and try to draw the wonderful shapes which had filled his eyes with their beauty. Sometimes, too, he would try and draw a village mother with her baby, or the little dog that sat and watched him, head on one side, alert and eager.

We know that he must have watched and pondered over these things, for we see them looking out at us from his pictures, painted long years after the village life was left far behind. He always loved to paint and to carve the things that had been around him in his simple, happy childhood.

Now it happened one day when Giotto was out on the hillside as usual with his sheep that a stranger came riding along the lonely road that led to the village. The boy kneeling by the rock, eagerly trying to trace the outline of one of his sheep feeding close at hand, did not hear the sound of the horse's hoofs, and never paused to look up until a voice from the road called to him. Then he started to his feet in surprise, and greeted the stranger with a shy "Good day, Master."

This was certainly no villager, but a stately knight from the city, such as Giotto had never seen before. The boy gazed up at him with wondering eyes.

Meanwhile the rider had dismounted, and stood

looking at the drawing rudely scratched upon the smooth surface of the rock.

"Who did that?" he asked abruptly.

"I was trying to make a picture of one of my sheep," answered the boy shamefacedly.

The man stood still, gazing intently at the drawing, and then from it looked at the little barefooted shepherd boy. Giotto was watching him shyly, he was not accustomed to city ways, and the manner in which the stranger looked at him made him feel shy.

"Who taught you to do this?" asked the stranger after a pause.

"Nobody taught me," said Giotto, a smile of amusement breaking over his face; "I only try to draw the things that my eyes see."

The stranger smiled too.

"How would you like to come with me to Florence and learn to be a painter?" he asked.

Giotto's cheeks flushed and his eyes shone. "Indeed, Master, I would come most willingly," he cried, "if only my father will allow it."

"I will come with you, and we will ask him," said the stranger.

The sheep could safely be left for a while, and Giotto trotted along by the stranger's side until they reached the village, and there they found Bondone working under the olive-trees.

"Perhaps my name is known to you?" said the stranger. "I am Cimabue, an artist of Florence, and I will take your boy into my studio and teach him, that he may one day become an artist too."

So this was the great man who had painted that wonderful picture! It seemed too strange to be true.

It was a splendid chance for the boy, and Bondone thankfully accepted the offer, although it meant taking away from him the light of his eyes. Who would have thought that the master would have deigned to notice those rough drawings on the hillside rocks!

But Cimabue knew better than anyone else how true and good those drawings were, and he recognised at once the power that dwelt in those little rough brown hands, and saw too in the boy's eager eyes how his heart was in his work.

So together the master and pupil set out on the long winding road that led to Florence, and before nightfall the City of Flowers opened her gates to the great artist and his humble apprentice.

It was only a simple shepherd lad that entered the master's studio then. He knew nothing but what he had learned from nature, under the blue sky, out on the hillside, using only nature's materials, the rocks and stones that lay around him, but the soul of the artist was in the boy, and he helped to fill the world with beauty and to sow the seed of the great tree of Art which was to blossom so gloriously in later years.

S. CATHERINE OF SIENA

It is more than five hundred years since S. Catherine was born in the little hill town of Siena, in the heart of Italy.

The hand of Time, which brings so many changes to most places, has passed but lightly over this little city set on a hill, and to-day it looks very much as it did in those long ago days when the child Catherine trotted about the steep streets, lived her happy life, and saw her heavenly visions.

To-day if you climb the winding road that leads up to the city, through the silver screen of the olive trees, and pass through the great city gates, you will find in one of the steepest of the narrow streets a house with this motto written upon it in golden letters, "Sposæ Christi Katharinæ domus," which means "the house of Katherine the Bride of Christ." And if you go in you will see the very room where S. Catherine used to live, the bed of planks on which she slept, her little chapel, and the other rooms which her brothers and sisters used.

It all looks just as it did when Benincasa the dyer of Siena lived there with his wife Lapa, in those old stormy days when Italy was vexed with foes without and within, and every city had need of a fortified wall and strong gates to guard it.

Although the dyer and his wife had a very large

family of more than twenty children, they did not think there was one too many, and when at last two little girls came on the same birthday they had a special welcome. But only little Catherine lived to enjoy the welcome. The other twin after a few days "winged her way to heaven," and all the love and tenderness of the parents seemed to gather round the baby that was left.

From the very first everyone loved little Catherine. She was such a happy, friendly child, and she had the sunniest smile that ever dimpled about a baby's lips. All the neighbours were her friends, for she smiled upon everyone, and as soon as she could toddle alone she started out to pay visits in the most friendly way.

She was as welcome as the sunshine wherever she went, and her happy smile lived deep in her eyes as well as on her lips, so that it seemed to find its way straight into the very saddest of hearts and carry a little message of joy. Perhaps that was the reason that erelong her stately name of Catherine was seldom used, and instead they called the baby "Joy."

At first when she toddled through the open door and wandered off alone the whole household was alarmed.

"The baby is lost again," cried the other children when no Catherine was to be seen, and the anxious mother could not rest until the child was found and carried home again. But as time went on the little wanderer was left to do as she pleased, for no harm ever came to her, and she was always sure to be safe with some neighbour. Nothing ever frightened the child in her wanderings. Everyone she met was a friend, every bird and beast and flower was something

to be loved and cared for. Wherever she went there were hands ready to lift her over rough places and kindly arms willing to carry her when her feet grew tired.

As soon as she could walk far enough it was to the church of S. Dominic that Catherine always made her way. She could see the campanile from the window at home when she looked across the little valley to the church that crowned the hill, and the sound of the bell had always seemed to her like a voice calling to her from afar. Nowhere was the child so happy as in the little side chapel when she knelt to say her prayers and felt the holy angels were hovering close around.

She was about six years old when the first of those heavenly visions was sent to bless her childish eyes, according to the old promise, "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God."

The busy mother had sent her and her little brother Stephen to carry a message across the valley, and as they were returning Catherine stood still for a moment to look at the sunset. The old church of S. Dominic stood out clear against a background of gold, and the clouds, flushed to crimson, were like drifts of shining glory in the sky.

Catherine stood, spellbound by the beauty of the night, but Stephen plodded on. He did not greatly care for sunsets. It was much more important to be home in time for supper, and evening was coming on.

Catherine never noticed that she was left alone, she did not hear Stephen calling to her. There she stood perfectly still, the light of the sunset upon her face, her hair shining like a golden halo around her head.

It was not the sunset but a heavenly vision which

Catherine gazed upon. There among the golden clouds sat the Madonna, holding in her arms the Infant Christ, all throned in heavenly glory. It was not the poor Madonna of the stable but the Queen of Heaven, a circle of stars about her head, her robe as blue as the summer sky. Only the same sweet Mother look was there as when she bent over the manger bed.

But who shall describe the vision of the Christ Child's face? Catherine only knew it was the Christ, and that He looked down upon her and smiled and lifted one little hand in blessing. She only felt that He drew to Himself all the love of her heart, and she laid it at His feet.

Then it was that Stephen, returning in search of her, shook her arm.

"Come on," he cried, "why art thou standing here?"

Catherine looked at him as if she had just been wakened from a dream.

"Oh Stephen," she cried, with a sob, "if only thou hadst seen what I have seen, thou wouldst have left me in peace."

The boy looked up bewildered; there was nothing to be seen but the church upon the hill, and a darkening sky where the pale golden light was fading into grey.

The vision had vanished, and night began to close in upon the two little figures as they went slowly home, the boy vexed with his loitering sister, and she sobbing with disappointment to think that the window in heaven was shut and she might never again look within.

But Catherine never forgot that vision, and as she grew older the remembrance of the Christ Child's

blessing made her long to grow more fit to be His faithful servant.

She had heard a great deal about the servants of God, called hermits, who went to live in desert places, where they thought they could live a holier life, and where they suffered many hardships in order to make themselves more perfect. Some of them lived in caves and had scarcely anything to eat, and then God sent ravens to bring them food.

It all sounded a beautiful way of serving God. Catherine was so fond of wandering about, and she had always longed to get beyond the city gates and see what the wild country round was like. She felt quite certain that once outside she would be sure to find a desert, and in the desert there would of course be many caves in which she might live.

So one day, very early in the morning, Catherine started out, having quite made up her mind to become a hermit.

The city gates were open and she slipped past unnoticed, and made her way down the steep hillside among the tangled briars and rough stones. It was very lonely out there, and everything looked so wild and forlorn that she was quite sure it must be the desert, especially when she spied a little cave in the rocks all ready for her.

It was very nice to creep in out of the hot sunshine into the cool shade and to rest until the sun went down. But as night came on and she knelt to say her evening prayer, she began to think of home and the kind mother waiting there, and suddenly she knew she had done wrong to come away, even though she had meant to serve God.

Very quickly she left her cave and ran home as fast as her feet would carry her. The desert had not been so very far away after all, and she soon reached home and told her mother all about it. Afterwards the neighbours said that angels had carried the child home so quickly, but Catherine knew it was love and repentance that had lent wings to her little feet.

As Catherine grew older she loved more and more to steal away to the church on the hill, to kneel in the quiet little chapel and think about the Master she had promised to serve. The stories of the saints, too, filled her mind, and she often sighed to think she was only a girl and could never be a great preacher like her favourite S. Dominic. Nevertheless she thought she might preach little sermons if it was only to children of her own age, so very often she gathered them round her, the little congregation listening with wonderful willingness, for Catherine had certainly the gift of a silver tongue.

In those days when a little girl reached the age of twelve years, it was thought to be quite time that her marriage should be thought of, and Catherine's parents began to look about for a good husband for their favourite child.

She had always been so obedient and so easy to manage that their astonishment was great when she told them quietly that she did not wish to marry, and had made up her mind to serve God.

This was nonsense, said her mother. Girls often fancied that they had a call to enter the convent and later on found out their mistake. Catherine must certainly marry. She should have gay new clothes

and kerchiefs, and silver pins to deck her hair, and then she would learn to do as she was bid.

But Catherine shook her head. She said very little but she was quite determined, and one day her mother found that she had cut off all her beautiful golden hair, hoping to make herself so ugly that no one would want to marry her.

"Now, by my faith," said her father, "if thou wilt not marry as I bid thee, then thou shalt do the housework and be our servant."

He expected this would be a great hardship, but Catherine was only too glad to have the hard work to do, and she did it so cheerfully and so thoroughly that her father felt his anger begin to melt away. It hurt Catherine sorely to vex her parents, only she felt so sure that God had called her to serve Him that she could not disobey the call. Then it happened one day that as her father passed her room he looked in, and saw her kneeling there with clasped hands and upturned face, upon which seemed to be reflected the peace of heaven, while round her head there shone a bright light which as he looked took the form of a snow-white dove hovering about her.

This sign from heaven and the patient humble spirit of their little daughter made her parents feel that the child had right on her side, and so they agreed that she should have her way.

A little room was set aside which she made into a chapel, where she could be alone to think and to pray, and here she learned to prepare herself for the life that lay before her, when she should go forth into the world to serve her Master, Christ.

All this happened very long ago, you say. We do

not hear of people who see visions now, and genius such as Catherine possessed is given to but few. That is true, but though times have changed and visions have faded from our matter-of-fact eyes, and the light of genius burns but dimly, still the lesson which Catherine learned in her childhood is the same lesson we must learn to-day—to be faithful in little things if we would be faithful in much. The wee common plants which she so carefully tended in her childish heart, her faith in prayer, her desire to serve God and to carry happiness to all around her, these little flowers of childhood may blossom on any child life now, and the fruit at harvest time shall be gathered, even though no splendid tasks well done shall win the world's acclaim.

JEANNE D'ARC

By the side of the grey willow trees and waving rushes, the river Meuse wound its way through the flat green valley, spreading itself sometimes in broad flashes, sometimes winding like a narrow silver ribbon, and again hiding away altogether among the grey stones that marked its course. All was green, grey, and level around. Even the little villages which dotted the river banks, with low roofs covered with moss and lichen, looked as if they were but a growth of the valley, and the grey church tower the tallest growth of all.

One of these little hamlets by which the river flowed was the village of Domrémy, a peaceful little spot which seemed to have but little connection with the great world of war and bloodshed which in those unhappy days threatened to lay France in ruins.

The people of the village were no fighters, but poor hard-working peaceful labourers, who tried to make a living out of their few fields, guarding their flocks and herds, and caring but little for the troubles that tore their country in pieces, except when some marauder swooped down and drove off their cattle and seized their goods. Then indeed the trouble touched them, but it was their own personal loss they feared. France was so much divided into small factions that there was little call to loyalty and patriotism.

Like all the other villages, Domrémy had its church with its little grey tower pointing upwards, and close to the church, separated only by the churchyard, was the house where Jacques d'Arc lived, and where on a cold January morning (in 1412) his little daughter Jeanne was born. There were other children in the house, strong boys who would grow up to help their father, and another girl, so the coming of this new baby made but little stir. They carried her across the churchyard to the village church, and there she received her name of Jeanne, or Jeanette as she was always called at home. It seemed to the simple villagers almost presumption to use the name of the great S. Jean for little helpless commonplace babies, and so they almost always added the diminutive, as we would say "little Jean."

There were all the rightful number of godmothers and godfathers round the font when Jeanne received her name, and the priest, Messire Jean Minet, said special prayers to preserve the child from evil spirits, for did not a girl always need such special protection?

Were there others round the font too which earthly eyes could not see? Surely the great cloud of witnesses stooped low that day to gaze upon the little face, and the church must have been filled with the rustling sound of angel wings as that baby brow was signed with the sign of the cross and the little soldier was enrolled under Christ's banner.

It was not an idle life that awaited Jeanne. Although her father was one of the chief men of the village, he, like all the rest, was poor, and had to work hard to make a living. There were many ways in which the children could help as soon as they were old enough, and each had his share to do.

In winter time, when the mists hung low over the valley and the sky was grey and cold above, Jeanne, in her coarse woollen gown and wooden sabots, would work in the fields or keep guard over the sheep. Then, when spring came round, scattering her flowers over the valley and wreathing a soft green haze over the grey bushes at the Blackthorn Spring, when the buds began to show warm and thick upon the Wood of the Oaks upon the slope of the hill, there, barefooted and happy, Jean gladly did her work, and was never tired of wandering in the wood or sitting spinning in the little garden behind the house, where the apple-blossoms spread their dainty pink against the blue sky.

The other village children often talked with bated breath of fairies who lived by the Blackthorn Spring and under the old beech-tree, called "the Tree of the Fairies," and even grown-up people believed in them too.

"I have heard that fairies came to the tree in the old days," said Jeanne's godmother once, "but for their sins they came there no more."

But Jeanne did not believe much in those fairies. She went sometimes with the other children to hang wreaths upon the Fairy tree, but she never expected to see them. She was much too busy and had too many other things to think about to pay any attention to fairies.

At home the good mother taught little Jeanne the few lessons she had to learn. There was no need for a little peasant girl to learn the A B C, for it was not expected that she should read or write, but she learned the Creed and the Lord's Prayer, and Our Lady's "Hail Mary," and she was taught to spin and do fine

needlework, besides the weeding and digging and work in the fields.

Sitting by the light that came sparingly through the small windows of the little grey house, Jeanne and her sister often sat spinning diligently, and while they worked together the mother would tell them the tales that Jeanne loved better than any fairy tales. These were the stories of the lives of God's saints, and Jeanne listened entranced, and was never tired of hearing them over and over again. Best of all perhaps was the beautiful story of the brave Maid Margaret, she of the golden heart and pure unspotted life, fit emblem of the golden-hearted, white-petalled daisy. Like Jeanne herself, this maiden had walked barefooted in the meadows, watching her sheep, when the Roman governor had seized her and carried her off to Antioch. There she refused to deny her Lord, and after being sorely beaten and bruised she was cast into a dungeon. Then came the part which made Jeanne's eyes gleam, when the poor maiden, weak and suffering, was beset by Satan, who came in the form of a fearsome dragon breathing out flames and smoke, and gazing upon her with burning eyes of dreadful fury.

The mother's voice went evenly on, while Jeanne waited eagerly for the rest of the story.

"But Maid Margaret showed no sign of fear, even when the monster came so close that she felt his hot breath upon her cheek. She raised herself on one arm, and then with a hand which did not even tremble, she made before her the sign of the cross.

"The dragon vanished at that sacred sign. The roaring ceased, the smoke cleared away, and Margaret was alone once more.

"Then a soft radiance lit up the dimness of the dungeon, and a voice sweeter than any earthly music fell on Margaret's ear:

"'Margaret, faithful servant of Christ, give thanks that thou hast triumphed over thy enemies. Hold fast thy faith, for soon thy torments will be ended, and thy Lord shall bid thee enter into thy rest.'"

Then came the ending of the story, the terrible martyrdom and the promise of S. Margaret that she would be ever near to help all women in distress who called her memory to mind.

Another of Jeanne's favourites was the story of S. Catherine, who in a vision saw the King of Glory, and taking Him for her Lord and Master, found His ring upon her finger, and remained faithful even unto the cruel death which awaited her.

Perhaps in the chapel on the hill Jeanne may have seen the pictures of her favourite saints set in the windows through which the sun threw rainbow tints upon her bowed head as she so often knelt before the altar there. Surely too the picture of S. Michael the Archangel must also have been set in those same windows, for in no other way could the child have learnt to know his face and figure, as there is no doubt she early learned to do.

But life was not made up only of peaceful days of spinning and story-telling and church-going in the little grey village on the banks of the Meuse. Sometimes the distant storm came nearer, and the thunders of war rolled past, and the poor folk of Domrémy suffered with the rest of France and were driven for a while from their homes.

Jeanne listened breathlessly to the tales which

came from the outside world telling of wars and bloodshed and treachery. The French were betrayed into the cruel hands of the savage English people. There was no King of France. The rightful King was uncrowned and deserted. The villagers listened, too, but they cared much more that their sheep and cattle had been stolen, and were only anxious to guard them from further harm. Only into Jeanne's heart the news sank deep, and she could not forget the uncrowned King.

Everyone in the village had a good word for little Jeanne, although they often laughed at her for going so often to church. She was too devout for a child, they thought. Yet after all it had seemed to do her some good, for her word could be absolutely trusted and her solemn "There is no mistake" was much more to be depended upon than the vows which other people swore. She was so kind, too, to those in trouble, and was always ready to nurse any sick child in the village or to help in any way those who needed her. Sitting spinning in the garden or wandering with her sheep about the green meadows, she dreamed her dreams, as most children do, but she was a practical, healthy little maiden, friendly with the other village children, strong and happy and busy as the day was long. It was always a great joy to her to steal into the quiet church and kneel there, feeling the presence of God and His saints very near, but even when she could not leave her work to go there, she loved to hear the bells calling to matins and compline. Wherever she was and whatever she was doing, that sound was like music to her, and it was a great disappointment

when sometimes the old verger forgot to ring the bells. Jeanne begged him to try and remember, and then to sharpen his memory she added, "and if thou dost not forget I will give thee cakes."

Time passed by and there was sorer need than ever that some helper and defender should arise to save France. Was there no strong man among her sons whom God would raise up to do battle for the rightful king? Yes, the call had come, but it came to no strong man, no great warrior, but to the little village maiden spinning under the pink petals of the apple-trees.

It was only a voice she heard at first, which seemed to come from the side of the garden nearest to the church.

"I come from God to help thee to live a good and holy life," it said. "Be good, little Jeanne, and God will aid thee."

Jeanne started up and looked in the direction from whence the voice came, and all that she saw was a shining light, brighter than any she had ever seen.

What could it mean? It was nothing evil, she was sure, for the light was so wonderful and the words were so good. Could it be the voice of an angel?

It was all so strange, she dared not tell anyone, and so she kept the secret to herself. The next time she heard the voice she was not so frightened, and the simple words repeated again, "Little Jeanne, be good," came like a message of comfort.

The third time when she heard the voice and saw the light, there breathed into the radiance a shadowy

form having in his hand a shining sword, a crown upon his head, and wings that wrapped him round. In an instant Jeanne knew him for S. Michael, the great warrior archangel, and she listened with bowed head while he spoke.

"Little Jeanne," he said, "it is thou who must go to the help of the King of France; it is thou who shalt give him back his kingdom."

As Jeanne knelt there trembling she could scarcely believe the message was meant for her. What could she, a little maiden of only thirteen summers, do in this far-away village to help the King?

"Daughter of God," said the voice she had learned to know, "thou must leave thy village and go forth into France."

Jeanne looked up.

"I am but a poor girl," she said; "I know not how to ride a horse or how to make war."

Again the voice sounded in her ears:

"Daughter of God, thou shalt lead the Dauphin to Reims, that he may receive worthily his anointing."

There was much for Jeanne to ponder over when the vision faded, but her thoughts were too deep to tell to others. In those summer days as she sat in the oak woods with the sunlight dancing through the green leaves and the solemn stillness of the woods around her, again and again she seemed to hear the voices and see the shadowy forms of the saints who were sent to help her. S. Margaret was there and S. Catherine too, and it was in such heavenly company that she was taught and strengthened and prepared for the work that was awaiting her.

So the pleasant days of childhood spent in the green

forests, the happy hours of spinning in the garden passed away, and little Jeanne, trying to obey the first message of the Voice's "be good," prepared to answer the call, not in her own strength but in the strength of God.

MICHAEL ANGELO

On the 6th of March, in the year 1474, a special star was shining up in heaven, and down on earth a newborn baby was wailing. Lodovico Buonarroti, the proud father of the wailing atom of humanity, noted the star most carefully, for he had been watching the sky to see if there was any sign there to foretell the fortune of his son.

"A fated and happy star," said he to himself joyfully, and afterwards the wise men, who could tell fortunes by the stars, told him he was right. Not that Lodovico needed that anyone should assure him of the brilliant future that awaited the child. Had he not been born on Sunday, the luckiest of days, and was there not something about the tiny face that almost filled him with wondering awe and reverence? The secrets of heaven seemed still to linger about the baby who had so lately come to earth.

"We will call him Michaelangelo," said his father. It was the most splendid name he could think of, the name of the great warrior archangel, the messenger of God. Surely that name would fit the most glorious destiny that awaited the little one.

Lodovico, who was at that time podesta, or mayor, of Caprese, came of a very ancient and noble family which had won much distinction in the service of Florence. The little new archangel, then, must carry

on the family record and help to make their name famous.

So it was with happy stars above and brightest hopes around him that Michael Angelo was born at Caprese, in the Casentino, not far from the holy ground of La Vernia, where the blessed S. Francis suffered and was so highly blessed.

Very soon after the birth of his son, Lodovico's term of office came to an end and he returned to Florence to take up his abode at the villa of Settignano, three miles from the city. Most of the people living round about the villa were stone-cutters, for there were many stone quarries there, and it was to the wife of one of these stone-cutters that the baby was sent to be nursed.

In the pure fresh mountain air little Michael grew strong both in mind and body, and the first sounds he learned to know were the ringing of the hammer and the working of the chisel in the stone quarries. In after years the great master used to say that if he had any good in him he owed it to the pure fresh mountain air, and that his love of carving came also from the stone-cutter's hut. Those sights and sounds of the quarries sunk deep into the child's heart, like a seed planted in a garden which was to spring up and blossom into a marvellous flower.

As the years went on other children were born to Lodovico, and Michael Angelo did not always seem such a wonderful boy in his father's eyes after all. Indeed he was rather a disappointment when he was old enough to be sent to the school kept by Messere Francesco of Urbino. He was not at all a brilliant scholar, and his progress was slow and quite common-

place. It was even hinted that he was rather a dunce, and he certainly neglected his lessons whenever he possibly could so that he might have more time for drawing. Give him a paper and pencil, and he forgot about everything else.

It was extremely vexing, for his father had set his heart on the boy being a credit to the family. What was the use of this drawing which seemed to be all that Michael cared about? He had no wish that a son of his should be an artist, and meanwhile it was most annoying to find the white-washed walls of the house and terrace scribbled over with all sorts of designs and figures. There was nothing to be done but to whip the boy soundly and see if that would put any sense into his head.

But the whippings did little good after all. Michael only crept back again, sore in body and mind, to his beloved drawings, and seemed to think it was quite worth while to suffer pain for the sake of his work.

No one at home understood why he should be so obstinate and determined, but he had a friend who knew all about it and who was a great help and comfort. How Michael envied his friend Francesco! He was quite a little boy but he was not obliged to go to school and learn dull lessons, and instead of being whipped when he tried to draw pictures, he spent his whole day at the studio of Messere Ghirlandajo, with nothing to do but to learn all about drawing and painting the livelong day. Every morning Francesco brought to Michael designs borrowed from the master's studio, and these Michael studied and faithfully copied, and every day the desire of his heart to become an artist grew stronger and ever stronger.

At last Lodovico saw that it was no use to scold and whip the boy. His heart was evidently set on becoming a painter, and nothing else would content him. The golden dreams which the father had dreamed over the baby's birth slowly faded into grey disappointment. He decided that there was no chance now of Michael making a splendid fortune in the wool or silk trade, such as he had planned, but that the boy must be allowed to have his way and continue that useless drawing.

But although Lodovico was disappointed, having so many other children to educate and but little money coming in, still he was determined to do his very best for his son. In all Italy there was no painter to equal Domenico Ghirlandajo, and with him the boy should be placed.

It was rather a surprise to find that after all Michael was not an idler, and that the hours spent over his drawing had not been wasted. It was seldom that a boy was paid any wages during the first year of his apprenticeship, but Messere Ghirlandajo found that Michael's work was so good that it was worth paying for, and it was arranged that he should receive a salary of nearly ten pounds a year.

Now at last Michael Angelo was free to work with all his might at the thing he loved best, and like a young giant he put his whole mind and strength to his tasks. So well did he work and so wonderful was his talent that Ghirlandajo soon found there was not much left to teach him, and that he could actually make corrections on the master's own sketches.

It was like placing an eagle in a hawk's nest. The young eagle quickly learned to soar far higher than

the hawk could do, and erelong began to "sweep the skies alone."

Ghirlandajo saw this quite clearly for himself, and perhaps felt some envy and bitterness. It was not pleasant to feel that a pupil, a mere boy, was outstripping his master.

They were working together one day in the great Chapel of Santa Maria Novella when the master went up silently behind the boy and watched him at work.

"This boy knows more than I do," said the master, amazed at the drawing he saw. It was time Michael should leave the studio.

So the year of his apprenticeship came to an end, and Michael Angelo commenced at once to study sculpture in the new art school opened by Lorenzo the Magnificent in the Garden of the Medici. Francesco was still his friend, and the boys now worked together in great content.

It was all a veritable wonderland for Michael Angelo; he had never dreamed of such treasures of beauty as were gathered together in the school of the Magnificent. Pictures, sculpture, engravings, gems, and enamels had all been collected by Lorenzo, whose great desire was to encourage the love of art. The studio of Messere Ghirlandajo had seemed a haven of joy, here was indeed a paradise.

It was not long before Lorenzo noticed the keen-faced boy working away so silently and diligently. He watched him as he modelled some figures in terra-cotta and was astonished at his masterly touch.

"Terra-cotta is but poor stuff to work on," said Lorenzo; "try instead what thou canst make of this block of marble."

There was a marble face of an old faun lying close at hand, and Michael set to work at once to copy it. He had never handled a chisel before and knew nothing about marble, but he never dreamt of saying so. He meant to carve that marble to the best of his ability. Difficulties were only there to be conquered.

So he worked away, forgetting all else but just the faun's face that was hidden in the block of marble. He chipped and he cut away, and as he worked the life seemed to spring out of the stone and an exact copy of the old faun grinned out of its marble prison.

Lorenzo was amazed next day when he returned to see what the boy had made of his piece of marble. It was the most wonderful copy he had ever seen, and it was even better than the original, for Michael had introduced ideas of his own, and had made the laughing mouth a little open to show the teeth and tongue of the faun. Lorenzo noticed this and turned with a smile to the young artist.

"Thou shouldst have remembered that old folks never keep all their teeth, but that some of them are always wanting," he said.

Lorenzo only meant this as a joke, but Michael was too much in earnest to understand jesting. He seized his hammer and struck out several of the teeth at once, never stopping to think if it would spoil his work.

This also pleased Lorenzo greatly, and he saw at once that here was no ordinary boy. There was nothing the Magnificent loved so much as genius, and he at once arranged that Michael Angelo was to be received into the palace and become the companion of Lorenzo's sons.

From that moment fortune began to smile upon the boy of the Medici Garden. Step by step he began to climb the ladder of fame, just as the stars had foretold. As he had seen within his first piece of marble the face of the faun, so he set out now to free with a giant's strength all the wondrous shapes that lay imprisoned in the marble blocks; and thus to-day the world owes some of its most beautiful statuary to the hammer and chisel of the boy who has been so well named Michael Angelo, after the warrior archangel, the Messenger of God.

QUEEN ELIZABETH

The people of England were not at all satisfied with the doings of their king, his Majesty Henry VIII. Most of them had great sympathy with poor Queen Katherine whom he had banished from the court, and therefore had no great love for the new queen, Anne Boleyn. So when it was announced that a little daughter had been born to Anne, the news was received with no signs of rejoicing whatever.

The King himself was extremely vexed that the baby was a girl instead of a boy. All the astrologers and fortune-tellers of the court had foretold the birth of a prince, and Henry had been so certain of this that the letters announcing the birth had been written beforehand, and now to the word "prince" they had to try and add a little "S" to turn it into princess. And that little "S" stood for a very big disappointment indeed.

It was at the old palace of Placentia, at Greenwich, that the princess was born, and according to the old rhyme she should have been "blythe and bonnie and good and gay," for she was born on a Sunday, and what was considered a good omen, she was born on the eve of the birthday of the Virgin, in the room known as "the chamber of the Virgins," from the tapestry which decorated its walls telling the story of the Ten Virgins. The fair young mother lying

there with her baby knew how disappointed the self-willed king would be, and she tried to smile as she pointed out that a baby born on such a special day and in such a special room must turn out a very special little virgin. But the King was not at all inclined to smile. He was accustomed to having his own way, and he wanted a prince, and he did not quite know on whom to vent his wrath. So he merely frowned and ordered the baby to be taken away, and its cradle removed from the Queen's bed-chamber in case the child should cry at night and disturb his rest.

Nevertheless, in spite of the annoyance the baby had caused, by being a princess instead of a prince, the arrangements for the christening were ordered in the most splendid and stately style.

The tiny red-faced baby, four days old, not very bonnie, and by no means gay, was clad in the most magnificent robes, and round her poor little limp neck was fastened a mantle of purple velvet lined with ermine, with a train of such a royal length that it had to be supported behind by three of the courtiers.

Sailing down from London in barges came the Lord Mayor and Aldermen in all their bravery to attend the christening of the "faire ladye," and a crowd of nobles, knights, and gentlemen gathered there also at the King's command. All the houses between the Palace and the Church of the Grey Friars were hung with gay tapestry and the road was strewn with green rushes, all in honour of the little lady who was to be carried that way to church.

It was a splendid procession that wended its way along the rush-strewn road. First came citizens of

low degree, then gentlemen and nobles of higher rank, and last the "faire ladye" herself in her purple and ermine robes, surrounded by some of the greatest ladies and nobles of the land.

At the silver font, with its canopy of crimson and gold, stood the Bishop of London, with many other bishops and cardinals, ready to receive the princess, and among them was Cranmer, who was to be the baby's godfather. So with all the pomp and ceremony of the Church, the little lady who was afterwards to be such a great queen received her name of Elizabeth.

"God of His infinite goodness send a prosperous life and long, to the high and mighty princess of England, Elizabeth," cried the royal herald, and then there was a tremendous flourish of trumpets, and the little bundle of purple and ermine was carried up to the High Altar, where the Bishop, laying his hand upon her small downy head, went through the rite of confirmation.

After that the christening gifts were presented, and besides many a golden bowl there was a cup of fretted gold set with pearls and other splendid gifts for the child who might one day be queen of England.

The company then solemnly partook of sugar-plums and wafers, and, that being done, the procession started for the palace again. This time the way was lighted by five hundred flaring torches, and the men-at-arms round the royal baby carried five waxen tapers.

It was all very splendid, but there was no real rejoicing that day. There were many who looked scornfully on all the pomp and ceremony and thought it most unnecessary.

"The Princess Mary," they said, "is our real

princess. Anne Boleyn is no queen, and this child has no right to be called a princess."

But the little Elizabeth cared no more for cold looks than she did for golden gifts and royal robes. After that first public appearance she retired to her nursery and grew and flourished day by day as a well-conducted baby should do. Then when she was two months old the royal nursery was removed to Hatfield, under the care of the Lady Margaret Bryan, who had been appointed governess to the royal child.

So the little barque set sail most gaily at first upon the perilous sea of life, and as yet there was no sign of storm or stress. The Princess Elizabeth was declared by Act of Parliament to be the next heir to the crown, and everything about her was ordered with the most royal splendour.

As the air of Chelsea seemed to agree well with Her Royal Highness, the King built a palace for her there, and was most particular that the nursery should be supplied with the purest spring water. Then he began to arrange a marriage for his little daughter with a prince of the royal house of France, but this came to naught, as Henry made too many selfish conditions for his own advantage.

Those were sad days for the Princess Mary, whose mother, Queen Katherine, had been so unjustly treated. She was ordered to go and wait upon her little step-sister and told she must no longer call herself princess, as Elizabeth was now the Princess of England. Little wonder was it that she disliked the baby with all her heart and bitterly resented the favour shown to her.

But no one need have grudged the little Elizabeth

those few happy years of court favour. Very soon the waves of this troublesome world threatened to overwhelm her in the same storm that wrecked her poor unhappy mother, and all the lofty state and splendour of the royal nursery was swept away.

Elizabeth was not quite three years old when she lost her mother. Poor Anne Boleyn must have longed to see her little daughter in those dreary days when she waited for death in the grim Tower prison, but if she asked this favour it was not granted. The unconscious happy child played as usual about the sunny garden at Chelsea, watching the mulberry-tree, which she had planted, put forth its buds in the soft spring air, and making her daisy chains and cowslip veils, while on Tower Green her mother was looking her last upon the world which was so full of the magic of May.

But although Elizabeth was too young to be troubled about her mother's death, she was quite old enough to feel the change in her life. Where were the servants now that were always ready to do her bidding? Why did she have no gay new clothes, and why did everyone look so sad and worried?

Her faithful governess, the Lady Bryan, did all that was possible for the child, but even her careful hands could not keep little garments from wearing out, and there was no longer a plentiful purse to provide for Elizabeth's needs. It was declared that she had no right to the title of Princess, and under no conditions could she ever become Queen of England.

The future might be dark enough but it was the present that pressed most hardly, just then, upon the child. It truly was enough to worry the poor governess who was left in charge. There was the little

princess growing out of her clothes, not fit to be seen, with neither gown nor kirtle that she could wear, and needing even night-gowns and night-caps, which it seemed no one's business to provide. Then too, as she complained in a letter to Lord Cromwell, "My lady Elizabeth hath great pain with her great teeth, and they come very slowly forth, which causeth me to suffer her Grace to have her will more than I would. I trust to God an' her teeth were well graft, to have her Grace after another fashion than she is yet." There was certainly a rod in pickle for Elizabeth as soon as those teeth should appear, and there would be no more excuse for naughty ways.

Evidently the good governess was not at all pleased with the way her charge was being brought up just then.

"She is as toward a child and as gentle of conditions as ever I knew in my life," she says, but she is sure that neither her health nor good manners would be improved by the way she was being treated. Every day the little princess was ordered to dine and sup at the state table, and it was impossible to prevent her clamouring for unsuitable dainties, wines and fruits, whereas she ought to have been supping on bread and milk in the nursery.

Elizabeth certainly owed much to this wise, sensible governess, and even if the child's clothes were shabby and she had neither "kerchief nor mob-caps" befitting her rank, the simple life she was forced to lead was much better for the little maiden than the pomp and splendour of her first three years.

As for the prospect of wearing the crown of England, that would in any case have been put out of

her reach when a year later a little step-brother was born, the long-expected, much-desired prince.

Bluff King Hal was in high good humour over the arrival of the infant prince, and he could even afford to bestow a little of his favour upon his four-year-old daughter and allow her to attend the christening of her brother.

It was a great day for Elizabeth, and the Lady Bryan must have spent much time in drilling her and showing her how to behave and how to manage the train of her little court gown—so much depended on her good behaviour and whether she would again find favour in her father's eyes.

Nothing could have been more sedate and courtly than the bearing of the little princess. She was lifted up and carried to the font by the Earl of Hertford, brother of the new queen, that she might see the wonderful baby, but afterwards when the service was over she walked with great dignity in the procession holding the hand of the Princess Mary, while one of the court ladies carried her train behind.

With the coming of the little brother came the happiest days of Elizabeth's childhood. She was such a wise, well-behaved small maiden, that she was allowed to be much with the baby prince, and as soon as he began to walk and talk she was like a little mother to him, teaching him new words and all her own store of wisdom.

Meanwhile she herself was being taught most carefully all that a princess should learn, and especially how to sew and embroider, although her hands were but small yet to use a needle properly. Still, by the time the baby prince celebrated his second birthday

and was presented with splendid gifts of gold and silver and precious stones, there was a tiny white cambric shirt among the gorgeous offerings which the Princess Elizabeth, now six years old, had sewn with her own hands.

The older he grew the more little Prince Edward loved his "sweetest sister," and the children were very happy together. They were both fond of lessons, and books were a delight to them. Every morning for an hour or more they studied the Bible, and then went on to their other lessons of science and foreign languages. Then when Edward went out riding or was taught some manly sport, Elizabeth "betook herself to her lute or viol, and when wearied with that, employed her time in needlework."

At court, meanwhile, change followed change, for the self-willed selfish King allowed nothing to stand in the way of his pleasure, and Elizabeth erelong must have grown quite accustomed to having new step-mothers. They all in their turn were fond of the child, and at last Katherine Parr, the sixth and last of Henry's wives, insisted that Elizabeth should come to court and have an apartment at the palace of Whitehall, and receive the instruction which befitted a princess.

It must all have been somewhat bewildering to the child, but she accepted everything very calmly, and was quite ready to make friends with her various step-mothers and assure them of her love and obedience. It was a great grief to her when she was parted from her little brother, but, for the rest, the various changes in her life did not trouble her greatly. She always behaved in a most seemly way and was a great favourite with everyone.

There was no doubt that the young princess was wonderfully clever. At twelve years old she was an excellent Latin scholar, knew four or five languages, had studied history most diligently, and knew a great deal about geography, astronomy, and mathematics. Her teachers were amazed at her quickness, and those who knew her used to say that God, having given the princess such great gifts, must surely have some special work for her to perform in the world.

But her future seemed then as uncertain as her childhood's days had been. The little barque had steered its way gallantly so far over shoals and dangerous seas, and although there had been many calm sunny days, the storms had never been very far off and there had been many a shipwreck around her. Who knew what her own fate would be? Did she see yet, far away on the horizon, the white sail of a smaller, frailler craft which would some day cross her track? Gossips at court talked of the betrothal of the baby Queen of Scots to the little Prince Edward, the brother she loved so dearly, but Scotland was a long way off and Mary Stuart was only three years old, and it was foolish to feel any prickings of jealousy.

The little white sail was indeed very far away as yet. How could she guess that in time to come she should be to blame for its shipwreck, and that Mary's death would leave such a blot upon her own fair name that neither her wisdom nor her many queenly virtues should suffice to cover or conceal the ugly stain.

MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS

It was in the month of December 1542, when grim winter held all the land of Scotland in its iron grip, and a storm of troubles swept the country, more fierce even than the wintry blasts, that a royal baby first saw the light in the old castle of Linlithgow.

"Is it a lad?" asked the people anxiously of one another. So much depended on that baby. He was to be their future king, and deliver their land from the English oppressor. The hopes of all the country were centred on the child.

But alas! it was no future king that was feebly wailing in the nursery of the old palace.

"It's a puir wee lassie," was the news that passed from mouth to mouth, and there were looks of bitter disappointment and sad foreboding.

With all haste the news was carried to the dying King James V, at Falkland, and when he heard of the birth of his little daughter he too had no welcome to give her. He had hoped with all his heart that he might have a son to carry on the Stuart line and rule the kingdom he was leaving.

"It came with a lass," he said slowly and sorrowfully, "and it will pass with a lass."

He was thinking how it was through Marjorie Bruce that the Stuarts just came to the throne, and it seemed but an ill omen that the crown should now pass to another "lass."

Perhaps the bitter disappointment hastened the King's end, for it was but an hour or two later that he died, and the little fatherless baby at Linlithgow became Queen of Scotland.

Then arose a storm of tongues, and a host of plots and plans raged round the cradle of the tiny Queen. Some wanted one thing and some another. Henry VIII of England, her father's uncle, wanted her kingdom as well as herself, and began at once to plot how he might secure both. The Earl of Arran, the next heir to the throne, wanted to have the child completely under his care.

So they all plotted and quarrelled, and meanwhile the Queen-mother, Mary of Lorraine, held the baby safely in her arms and refused to be parted from her. Enemies might gather round, but they had little chance of harming the child when her mother's watchful care surrounded her.

It was rumoured then that the baby was sickly and likely to die, but well might the nurse, Janet Sinclair, deny with scorn such idle tales. The child was as healthy as a child could be. She was as fair and sweet as a flower, and the pride of Janet's heart.

In the sunniest, warmest rooms of the old palace, facing the lake, the royal baby grew and thrived, caring not a jot for the storms that raged around her. When the nobles of her realm came to render to her their homage and to hail her as their Sovereign lady, Mary Queen of Scotland and the Isles, their presence did not greatly disturb her Majesty as she lay warm and contented on her nurse's knee. The next great state ceremonial, however, was not at all to her taste.

It had been considered safer to take the child to

Stirling Castle, where she could be securely guarded from foes at home and abroad, and here, nine months later, her coronation was celebrated.

Little Mary was dressed in queenly robes, which doubtless harassed her greatly, and carried in state by her lord-keepers and other nobles across the green to the stately church. There she was solemnly crowned and presented to the people as their Sovereign lady.

It was such a big crown for such a tiny head, and the baby's hand could not grasp the heavy sceptre, while the sword of state was bigger than the little Sovereign lady herself. The throne on which she was held was cold and comfortless, and it is little wonder that she cried and protested loudly. She wanted her mother and Janet her nurse. These great rough men could not know how to hold a baby properly. She did not like the crowd of faces, and the noise frightened her. Then no one seemed to mind whether she cried or not, and she had to sit on that uncomfortable throne while every prelate and peer of the realm knelt before her and, placing a hand upon her head, swore to serve her truly and loyally. She was even kissed by her two kinsmen Arran and Lennox, and that perhaps was worst of all.

"It is an evil sign," said the people, shaking their heads solemnly, as their queen wept and wailed bitterly all through her coronation. Poor little queen! There were always people ready to blame her, even when she did what every other child in her realm would have done under the same circumstances.

So the baby's head was crowned in state and her portrait was struck off on a little copper coin, which

was called a "bawbee" perhaps because of the baby face upon it.

Now the King of England did not at all approve of this coronation, and he was furiously angry because all his plots had come to naught. He had planned that the little Queen of Scotland should marry his son Edward, and be brought up in England, but the Queen-mother had different plans, and it was no easy matter to storm the good old castle of Stirling and carry away the baby by force. Cunning too was of little avail, for the Queen was loyally guarded by her lord-keepers, who had wise heads as well as faithful hearts.

"We demand to see the Queen," said the Earl of Angus, riding up to the castle with a strong company of his followers behind. "It is rumoured that she hath been removed and another child substituted and we must see with our own eyes if this be so."

The lord-keepers watched the armed men pressing forward, but they answered calmly and courteously that the request should be granted. Only the rule of the castle was that but one man at a time should enter the castle gate, be presented to the Queen, and that in the presence of her lord-keepers and guards. The plan had been to seize the child as soon as Angus and his followers were admitted into the castle, and their looks of rage and disappointment when their plan came to naught must have warned the lord-keepers to be more than ever on their guard.

The outside storms swept on and Mary's kingdom was laid waste by the invading English, while men quarrelled continually as to who should be the future

husband of the little Queen. And all the time the little maiden herself grew like a rose in a sheltered garden, gradually unfolding its petals and growing more lovely day by day. There were other flowers too in that sheltered garden, four other little Maries, her playmates and maids-of-honour. Together they learned their lessons and stitched their pieces of embroidery, and together they gaily played their games, as if the world was full of sunshine, and no dark clouds of war and misery hung over the land.

But the storm of war drew closer, and it was thought safer for a while the little Queen should leave the stronghold of Stirling Castle and take refuge in the priory of Inchmahome, a little island in the Lake of Menteith. From there she could easily escape to the Highlands if the English army advanced on Stirling.

Mary was five years old at that time and was a very charming child. She seemed to have the gift of making everyone love her, and even the rough fishermen of the lake, who saw her playing on the shore with her four Maries, watched her with love and loyalty in their eyes, and she ruled as a veritable queen over their hearts.

Dressed in black silk with a gay tartan scarf, and her shining golden hair bound with a rose-coloured satin snood, she made a pretty picture for her loyal subjects to gaze upon, as she and her maids-of-honour held a mimic court on the little island.

Five years was no great age, but yet Mary was already learning history, geography, and Latin, and could speak French as well as English. She was learning too how to sew tapestry and to embroider as well.

But while the little Queen was safely learning her lessons and playing her games at Inchmahome, the Queen-mother was anxiously arranging fresh plans for her little daughter. She was a Frenchwoman, and through all those years of trouble and anxious fears her heart had always turned to her own dear land of France, and now she decided that little Mary should be sent there, and that when she was old enough she should marry the young Dauphin Francis. It was very hard to part with the child, but it seemed to be the best and only way.

Everything was made ready as secretly as possible, for although Henry VIII was now dead, the English were still anxious to carry off the little Queen, and it was impossible to set sail from Leith, for the English fleet was guarding the Forth. So Mary and her maids-of-honour and all her court and guardians were taken to Dumbarton, and waited there until the French galleys arrived to carry her over to France.

It was a very sad little child with tear-stained face that set sail that day. She was leaving her mother and going off to an unknown land, and everything felt sad and strange to her. But although only six years old she showed that she was a Stuart and a queen, and she bore herself with gallant self-control. Only the tears in her eyes spoke of a very sore little heart as she bade her mother good-bye.

It might have been hoped that gentle winds and kindly weather would make the voyage as pleasant as possible for the little desolate Queen, but instead of that a most terrific storm arose, and Lady Fleming, the Queen's governess, began to wonder if they would ever see land again. But at last, after days of tossing,

a haven was reached, and the little Scotch Queen and all her court were landed on the coast of Brittany. As soon as they were able they went at once to Morlaix, to return thanks in the cathedral there for their escape from the perils of the sea and from the hands of the English.

It happened that as they were returning from the city, the drawbridge over which the little Queen had just passed gave way, and there was a scene of great terror and confusion as it crashed down into the river beneath. It was enough to frighten any child, but Mary was perfectly calm and showed no sign whatever of fear.

It was this fearless spirit of hers which so charmed her uncle Francis, Duke of Guise. "My niece," he said to her, "there is one trait in which, above all others, I recognise my own blood in you—you are as brave as my bravest men-at-arms. If women went into battle now, as they did in ancient times, I think you would know how to die well."

Journeying on to the Castle of S. Germain, Mary was welcomed there by the little French princes and princesses, and saw for the first time the Dauphin who was to be her future husband. The two children soon became good friends, and as they were about the same age they learned their lessons together, and were taught their dancing steps by the same master.

Dancing came very easily to the graceful little Queen, and it was not long before she and her small partner were called upon to dance before the King and Queen and the whole court. It was perhaps impossible to avoid bringing the child forward, for she had exactly the gifts which best fitted her to shine

in a gay court, and she attracted notice wherever she went. But the great sheltered life in the old grey castle of Scotland must have been a healthier and better training for the little maid. The brilliant court of France was scarcely the best place in which to bring up a child. Janet, the Scotch nurse, did not greatly love the change, and must have often shaken her wise head over these foreigners and their ways. They tried at first to part her from her charge, but that was no easy matter, and she soon showed that she was not a person to be lightly set aside.

So two years passed by, and then came the joyful news from Scotland that the Queen-mother was about to return to France for a short time, to visit her little daughter. Mary's delight knew no bounds, and she wrote at once to her grandmother, the Duchess of Guise, to tell the good news.

"My Lady," she wrote, "I am very glad to be able to offer you these present lines for the purpose of telling you the joyful tidings which I have received from the Queen, my mother, who has promised me, by her letters dated xxii. of April, to come over very soon to see you and me, and for us to see her, which will be to me the greatest happiness that I could desire in this world; and this rejoices me to such a degree as to make me think I ought to do my duty to the utmost, in the meantime, and study to become very wise, in order to satisfy the good desire she has to see me all you and she wish me to be."

The coming, so much looked forward to, was delayed for some months, and gave the little Queen time to try and grow wise as she had planned, but at last the happy day arrived.

How the child must have longed to run and meet her mother, to throw her arms round her neck and feel the kisses she had missed so sadly! But the meeting was a state affair and Mary had to remember she was a queen first and a daughter afterwards. She read the address of welcome that had been prepared for her, and inquired solemnly into the affairs of her kingdom with a graciousness and dignity that sat quaintly on a child of eight years old, and it was small wonder that everyone was delighted with her. The only wonder was that her little head was not turned by all the praise and admiration showered upon her.

Childhood's days of happy unconsciousness were but short ones for this little Queen of Scotland. Far too early she knew the cares and troubles that gather round the head that wears a crown. She still had many hours of childish joy, gay days in the forest hunting and hawking, fêtes at court and many a merry-making, but the weight of the crown was always there, and each year brought fresh responsibilities. After that one happy visit she never saw her mother again, and that must alone have been a sore grief to her faithful little heart. She was not a child to forget easily, and those she loved had their place very deep in her heart. She was carefully thoughtful for all those who served her, and never failed to help them when it was in her power. Many a letter she wrote to the Queen-mother reminding her how faithful the good Janet had been, and begging for some favour to be bestowed upon her.

The childish face of the little Queen, so full of charm and beauty, began very soon to wear a grave

and thoughtful expression. Her eyes that gazed so earnestly out to the future had often a wistful look in them, for her life even at twelve years of age was not a very easy one. What did the future hold for her? Brilliant days of happiness perhaps, many triumphs, and surely many cares. But who can look into the future? It is hidden from all mortal eyes, and was hidden then, thank God, from the wistful innocent eyes of Scotland's child queen.

LOUIS XIII

"Is it a son? I beseech you not to give me false hopes. It would kill me."

So spake Henri-Quatre, King of France, to the nurse who came to tell him of the birth of his child.

Yes, it was a son, a "petit M. le Dauphin," and as the nurse uncovered him to show to his father, tears of thankfulness ran down the King's cheeks. There had been no Dauphin in France for nearly eighty years, but now, thank Heaven, all was well.

"Ma mie," said Henry to his Queen, Marie de' Medici, "God has done us the great grace of giving us what we asked. We have a fair son."

Great preparations had been made for the arrival of the Dauphin, and already a governess, Madame de Montglat, had been chosen to take charge of the precious heir to the crown of France. Into her care the baby was given as soon as the first ceremonies were over. But first of all it was necessary that his little body should be carefully bathed in red wine and oil, and his head anointed with oil of roses, and then the King solemnly blessed his little son, and put a sword into the little mottled fist as he prayed that it might only be used for the glory of God and the defence of the French nation.

The news of the Dauphin's birth was received throughout France with the greatest rejoicings. *Te*

Deums were sung and general thanksgiving services were held for this gift from Heaven, while the Pope himself was invited to be godfather.

It was at the Castle of Fontainebleau, in the year 1601, that this little descendant and namesake of S. Louis was born, happily unconscious of all the duties and responsibilities and dangers that were waiting for the child who would one day wear a crown. He laughed and gurgled, screamed and wailed just like any other baby, although Maître Jean Héroard, the court physician, whose special charge he was, lost no time in telling him how he had been sent by God to be a "good, just, and righteous sovereign."

The baby listened attentively, being at that time about three months old, and crowed with delight, which Héroard solemnly declared was a sign of his good understanding.

At any rate, however much or little the baby understood, he grew and thrived in the pure fresh air of Saint Germains, where his nursery was established and where he was to pass most of his childhood.

Outside his nursery lurked the shadows of treason and danger, and it was a peaceful rest for the King when he could amuse himself by watching his little son asleep in his cradle, or carry him out on to the terrace in the warm spring air. The baby face was calm and unconscious of all those traitorous plots which were being planned to put an end to the little life which had just begun.

But the clouds passed by and Louis began to grow out of his babyhood. His governess, "Mamanga" as he learned to call her, had entire charge of him, and did not treat him in the wisest way. Either he was

treated too severely or over-indulged, and almost as soon as he could walk he learned to fear the whip which was always kept near at hand for his punishment. There were other kinds of things too which Mamanga taught him to fear. Sometimes when he was naughty she would send for a mason working about the palace and bid him carry the naughty child away in his hod, or a locksmith would come and bring with him hammer and nails, which it was said were used to hammer into bad obstinate little boys. Worst of all was the birch-rod which came dangling down the chimney of the royal nursery, let down, so said the governess, by an angel who had brought it from heaven specially for him.

There were other children by this time in the royal nursery, a baby sister and some half-brothers, and Louis domineered over them all, for he had been taught to think himself the most important person in the world. Only good Héroard the physician, who truly loved the child, saw how badly he was being trained, but except where the Dauphin's health was concerned he had no right to interfere.

There was one person, however, whom Louis erelong learned to obey. The King, his father, would allow no wilful ways, and insisted that the spoilt child should be instantly obedient. Father and son having both strong wills they naturally very often clashed and then a storm raged. Héroard writes in his journal, when Louis was nearly three years old: "The King comes to see him and plays with him daily. The Dauphin is put into such a bad temper that he nearly bursts himself with screaming, and all was in so great confusion that I had not the courage to observe what

he was doing, except that, crying very much, he wanted to beat all the world."

It was a big desire, and no doubt those around him came in for their share of blows from the furious little hands, but even in his rage when he felt himself roughly handled by the King and ordered to be immediately whipped he recognised the voice of authority.

As soon as the Dauphin was considered old enough to know how to behave properly he went with the King and Queen to enjoy the pleasures of Fontainebleau, and at first all went well.

The King was amused with the royal airs of his small son, and laughed at the way he ruled the nursery. The other children were not even allowed a cushion to kneel on when they said their prayers.

"Pray God on the ground," he bade them sternly, and when he found the King in his own particular seat in the chapel he promptly ordered him to be turned out. "He is in my place. Get out of it," he said.

But the Dauphin was beginning to love his father with all his heart, which made it easier for him to learn to be obedient. Together they walked about the gardens hand in hand, and fed the swans and ducks and played with the fountains. It was so delightful to turn the water on and off with his own hands and send a shower of drops over his father. The saddest part of the day was when he was carried off to bed, and even then the King came and kissed him good-night.

That all happened on the happy days when he was obedient and good, but Héroard tells of stormy times as well. There was one day when Louis was in the nursery playing happily with his favourite drum, when the order came for him to go to his father. This did

not happen to please the Dauphin at the moment, and he went with a very bad grace. He entered the room with a very cross little face and forgot to uncover his head. The King sharply ordered him to take off his hat, and, as he did not do it quickly enough, snatched it off himself.

The Dauphin, inclined to be cross already, was now in a furious temper, which grew worse as the King proceeded calmly to take away his drum and drum-sticks as well as his hat.

"My hat, my drum, my drum-sticks," screamed the child.

The King, inclined to tease the little fury, put the tiny hat upon his own head, out of reach of the small hands, and the Dauphin was beside himself with rage.

"I want my hat," he screamed. Then the King began to lose patience with such a cross little boy and struck him on his cheek with the desired hat. Then he caught him firmly by his wrists and lifted him high in the air.

"Hé! you hurt me! Hé! my drum! Hé! my hat!" screamed the child.

At last the Queen interfered and gave him his hat and his drum, but he was carried away in disgrace to be whipped. Even the whipping did not subdue him, and he kicked and scratched his governess with all his might. At last his nurse took him away and tried to show him how naughty he was.

"Monsieur," she said, "you have been very stubborn. You must not be so. You must obey papa."

"Kill Mamanga," he sobbed, "she is wicked. I will kill all the world."

But these quarrels were difficult to make up, and it

was some time before Louis and his father were friends again. Only as time went on "le petit valet de papa," as he loved to call himself, learned to have more self-control and to keep his temper.

At five years old Louis made his first public entry into Paris and was welcomed by the people as their future king, but it did not amuse him at all. "I have been a great pleasure to my mother," he writes to the King, "and I made war in her room and wakened the enemy there with my drum. I have visited the Arsenal and will pray God for the King. I am very sleepy."

The public baptism and naming of the Dauphin was now to take place, and everyone tried to impress upon him how well he must behave. If he was not very good, they said, another dauphin would take his place and his name.

"I would not care," replied the child; "I would be very glad of it. I should then go where I pleased and no one would follow me."

However when the time came both he and his little sisters behaved extremely well, and Louis made all his responses dutifully.

He wished he had been named Henri, after his father, and it scarcely comforted him to be told of his great namesake Saint Louis. There was no one in his eyes so splendid as his soldier father, although he listened to the story of the great saint with interest and was somewhat consoled about his name.

Sometimes the people around him would speak to Louis of the time when he would come to the throne and fill his father's place, but he always turned angrily away and would not hear of it. Even at the Twelfth Night party when he was chosen king, he refused the title.

"Hé! that belongs to papa," he said.

His father's rights he guarded as his own, and there was some difficulty when he was being instructed in the Ten Commandments and came to the one "Thou shalt not kill." He was quite sure that all the King's enemies should perish.

"Ho, ho! I shall kill Spaniards, who are papa's enemies," he said; "I shall turn them well into dust."

"Monsieur," replied the chaplain gravely, "Spaniards must not be killed. They are Christians."

This was most disappointing and annoying, and Louis was obliged to give in very sorrowfully.

"I will then go and kill Turks," he said gloomily.

After his public baptism, and now that he was six years old, Louis began to feel that he ought to make some good resolutions about his behaviour, and he decided that when the devil tempted him to be stubborn or wilful he would go away into a corner and say his paternoster.

But alas! when the temptation came the good resolution was forgotten, as was shown very soon after.

It was the custom in Holy Week that on Maundy Thursday the King should wash the feet of thirteen poor old men, to commemorate the washing of the disciples' feet at Jerusalem.

Now it happened that the King was not very well that Easter and could not perform the ceremony, so the Dauphin was bidden to take his place, which was the beginning of the trouble.

Louis flatly refused to do as he was bid. He did not want to wash anyone's feet, and it was only when the King himself commanded him that he most unwillingly consented.

The ballroom of the palace was filled with a great crowd of nobles and people, and the thirteen poor men were all in readiness when the Dauphin entered. He came slowly and unwillingly, gazed at the poor men and then at the basin. Then his face grew red with indignation. It was his own special basin which they were using, and that was more than he could bear. He drew back, and with sobs refused to have anything to do with the washing of the feet, and at last the chaplain was obliged to take his place.

Perhaps the King had some sympathy for his little son. At any rate Louis was not whipped that time as he might have expected. He certainly did not seem inclined to follow very closely in the footsteps of his saintly namesake, but at the same time he took a keen interest in his religious lessons, and listened eagerly to any Bible stories. In chapel he carefully pointed out to his little sister the prayers he wished her to say, and was very scornful about the fables she learned to repeat to her father. He himself only repeated Bible stories which were true, he said.

But although little madame, now five years old, listened meekly enough and said her prayers as directed, she would sometimes, to his great astonishment, turn round and rebuke him for his own bad behaviour.

"Hé! Monsieur," she said one day at dinner when the Dauphin had been ill-tempered and rude to his governess, "you should not act thus. You would not so much as be known to be the son of the King. One must not take fancies; one must not give way to tempers, Monsieur. Mamanga will whip you. One does not speak thus to gouvernantis. It is not pretty, Monsieur."

So astonished was the Dauphin that he had nothing to answer, for it was seldom indeed that anyone under his royal rule dared to rebuke him. Perhaps the lecture did him good, for he was rather too fond of giving orders about the behaviour of others, and did not hesitate to make his wishes known. Even when his governess was in trouble over the death of her husband, Louis issued his royal command.

"I wish you not to cry. Laugh," he calmly remarked, becoming tired of the sight of her tears.

It was natural enough perhaps that he should consider himself of so great importance, for those around him never ceased to remind him that he was the Dauphin and the future King of France. In his father's absence it was he who gave the watchword to the captain of the guard, and although he was barely seven years old he wrote all his mother's letters for her when she was ill.

"My place is everywhere," he said grandly once when bidden to take his place in some little dance.

The time was now drawing near when the Dauphin would be eight years old and would pass out of the hands of his governess to be trained by tutors. Meanwhile, to prepare him for the change, a number of boys of his own age, sons of noblemen, were sent with their tutors to be with him at Saint Germains, where he held a miniature court and ruled them as his father ruled his kingdom.

"You are their master," Héroard told him. "When they do wrong you must rebuke them, and for their punishment tell them that, unless they are good, you will love them no longer."

But this was not at all Louis' idea of ruling. He thought there ought to be a much more severe punish-

ment than the mere loss of his love and favour, and he insisted that all evildoers should be whipped soundly. One of his little companions when playing together happened to strike a blow, and Louis immediately ordered his tutor to whip him.

"But," said Héroard anxiously, "you will command his tutor not to whip him on condition that he does it no more?"

"I do it in order that it should not happen again," said Louis firmly.

When at last the little Dauphin was handed over to his governor, M. de Souvré, it was a great change indeed, although he was not at all sorry to say goodbye to his governess. Instead of the country life of Saint Germains he had now to live at the Louvre, and was not nearly so free to wander about at will. His brothers and sisters were left behind in the nursery, but his companions were the same and he ruled them as strictly as ever, and refused to allow anyone to interfere with his command. When he went out these "little gentlemen" marched two and two in front of him, and he drilled them and passed them in review before the King, like a little soldier. His love for his father grew ever greater and deeper, but there were still times when his stubborn temper caused trouble between them. Taken to Fontainebleau again, he was out one day with the King when they came to a ditch which the boy easily leapt over, standing at the edge. The King ordered him to jump it with a run, and Louis sulkily refused. He was afraid he might miscalculate the distance and fall in, and that his father would laugh at him. The King was not accustomed to having his orders disobeyed, and be-

came more and more angry as Louis stubbornly refused to jump. He was very much inclined to duck the boy in the water, but instead told him he would whip him soundly unless he jumped at once. Louis refused and took the whipping silently, merely saying that it did not hurt.

Perhaps his father was more strict and harsh with him than with the other children, but when the Queen pointed this out he said that there were many people who would correct the others but there was no one else who would whip the Dauphin.

Alas! the strong hand that corrected little Louis was soon to be removed, and there was but a short time now for those happy walks or unhappy quarrels. Only a few more months and then the terrified child was told that his father had been assassinated in the streets of Paris, and that the shouts he heard of "Long live the King!" were meant for him.

"I would I were not King," he cried; "I would it were my brother. I fear they will kill me, as they killed the King my father."

And at night he begged that he might not sleep alone.

"Lest dreams should come to me," he said in a fearful whisper.

Poor little King! Well might he wish that his head need not bear the weight of a crown. It was such weary work to try and be wise, to put away his toys and be a man. There were so many shadows lurking round his path, so many evil dreams to haunt him. In all the world surely there is none who need so sorely Heaven's special help and protection as he upon whose head there rests a crown.

SIR ISAAC NEWTON

Long ago, in the year 1642, there was born on Christmas Day one of the tiniest babies, with one of the most wonderful brains that the world has ever known. He was so small that his mother used afterwards to say that he might have been easily put into a quart mug, and yet inside the head of that little Hop-o'-my-thumb there was something which was to make him one of the great men of the earth.

Small as the baby was, he was a very precious gift to his young mother, who had lost her husband soon after her wedding day, and the little fatherless baby was doubly welcome when he came into the world with the sound of the Christmas bells.

It was in the manor house of Woolsthorpe in Lincolnshire that this baby was born, and on New Year's Day he was carried to the parish church at Colsterworth and given the name of his father, Isaac Newton. It could have been no easy matter to dress the baby in any christening robe except such as a fairy or pixie might wear, but the boy soon began to grow apace and erelong showed plainly that he was no changeling, but a healthy, vigorous young Briton.

As soon as Isaac was old enough he went to a day school, first at Skillington and then at Stoke,

but it was not until he was twelve years old that he was entered at the public school of Grantham, and was sent to board at the house of Mr. Clark, an apothecary of that town.

Now Isaac was rather careless and inattentive about his lessons and was usually at the very bottom of his class, until it happened one day that he had a fight with a boy near the top. This boy was a bully and did not play fair, but gave Isaac a very nasty kick which hurt badly.

From that day young Isaac made up his mind to get above his enemy in class, and at once gave his whole mind to learning his lessons. Each day he won a higher and higher place, and, even after passing the enemy, kept steadily on until he became head boy of the school.

Schoolboy games had little interest for Isaac, for he had quite a different way of amusing himself and needed every precious spare moment for carrying out his plans. His head was full of ideas about making mechanical models which would work by themselves, and he collected by degrees all sorts of little saws, hatchets, hammers, and other tools which he used with deft clever fingers.

A windmill was being built just then on the road not very far from Grantham, and Isaac watched the building whenever he could with the most intense interest. He made friends with the workmen, and was allowed to look on while they put together all the different parts of the machinery, so that by the time it was finished he knew almost as much about it as the workmen themselves. After that it was no very difficult matter for him to make a small model of

the windmill with sails and machinery complete, to the great wonder and admiration of all who saw it.

The wonderful little model windmill was set at first on the roof of the house, that the wind might turn the sails and set the machinery working, but as winds are apt to be uncertain, Isaac thought of a new plan and began to work his model by animal power. A kind of treadmill was connected with the machinery, and a mouse was set to run round and round, or rather to try and run round, which set the wheel in motion.

It is to be hoped that the inventor was kind to "the little miller," as he called the mouse, for it must have been hard and monotonous work for the small animal who cared nothing for mechanical experiments, and was only anxious to climb up to the corn placed so temptingly beyond his reach above the wheel.

Isaac's next idea was to make a clock worked by water, and he begged the apothecary for a good-sized wooden box and fitted it up with a dial and hands, and arranged the works which were set agoing by the slow dropping of a certain quantity of water which he regulated daily. It really turned out to be quite a useful clock, and was used by the whole family for many years.

After that came the idea of a little carriage on four wheels, which could be worked by the person who sat inside, but although this was made it was not a great success, as it was impossible to work it uphill, and it was only useful on very smooth level roads.

The boys at school soon discovered that although

Isaac Newton was no good at games he could make the most splendid things to play with, and his kites were the envy of everyone. He made paper lanterns too, which were extremely useful on winter mornings when the boys had to find their way to school in the dark. These lanterns served another purpose as well and a more entertaining one, for it was great sport on dark nights to light one and tie it on to the tail of a kite, so that the folk round about talked in awestruck tones of the comet that had been seen in the sky.

Those school companions were nevertheless of no great interest to Isaac, and his real friend was a little girl, two or three years younger than himself, who was living in the same house in which he lodged. He must have been a very delightful friend for any little girl to have, for he made her the most beautiful chairs and tables for her dolls, and all kinds of little cupboards and boxes in which to keep her treasures. She was a clever child, and Isaac, who was a "sober, silent, thinking lad," was much happier in her company than in the playground with those shouting boys. His friendship with little Miss Story lasted all his life.

All this time besides making toys and working models, Isaac had taught himself to draw, and it was one of his great pleasures. His room was hung with pictures drawn and framed by himself, some of them original drawings and some copies. It is said that his walls were "covered with charcoal drawings of birds, beasts, men, ships, and mathematical figures, all of which were very well designed."

But although he was so fond of drawing it was certainly his making models which took up most of his

attention. The water-clock was not very satisfactory after all, and he now turned his attention to making sun-dials. The country people round about thought very highly of "Isaac's dial," and often came to tell the time of day by it.

When Isaac was still a little boy, his mother had married again and made her home at the rectory of North Witham, but by the time he was fourteen his step-father died and the family went back to live at the old manor house of Woolsthorpe.

It was necessary then that some one should help to work the farm, and as there was but little money to spare for school fees, Isaac was brought home, that he might set to work at once and learn to be a farmer.

There was not much of a farmer about Isaac, and there seemed a poor chance of turning him into one. When he was sent to the Grantham market to sell grain and buy what the household required, he left all the bargaining to the servant who went with him, and wandered away to his old lodgings where he knew he would find books to read. Sometimes he even carried a book from home, with him, and stretched himself out behind some hedge to read while the old servant went on to the market, and lay absorbed until the servant returned and it was time to go home.

It was just as bad if he went to do work in the fields. His whole mind was bent on inventing water-wheels or some other contrivance, or else he was so deeply interested in watching the sun-shadows that he allowed the sheep to wander away at their own sweet will, and never noticed when the cows broke into the cornfields, eating and trampling down the corn.

Evidently it was no use to try and make a farmer

of Isaac, for both the boy and the farm suffered, and so his mother with a sigh made up her mind to let him go back to school to prepare for the university. Perhaps, after all, thought she, there *might* be something in his queer ideas and his curious love for strange calculations.

So the path was made smooth for Isaac Newton to follow until it led to those wonderful discoveries that were to bring a flood of light into the world, and set his name foremost in the list of great men of genius.

Well might they long afterwards write in the room where that small baby was born one Christmas Day—

> "Nature and Nature's laws lay hid in night,
> God said 'Let Newton be,' and all was Light."

SAMUEL JOHNSON

THERE never was a more miserable-looking infant than little Samuel Johnson when he first opened his eyes to the light. It may be that his parents saw some beauty in their new-born son, but to other eyes he was nothing but a poor wailing atom, unhealthy and unattractive.

"I wouldn't have picked up such a baby in the street," remarked his aunt afterwards, and most people would have quite agreed with her.

At first it seemed very unlikely that the baby would live, and so he was baptized on the very day he was born, on the 18th of September 1709, but in spite of every drawback he struggled along and gradually began to take a firmer hold on life.

It was in a curious old house near the market-place of Lichfield that Samuel Johnson was born, and there his father, Michael Johnson, sold books and stationery and lived a busy life. He not only sold books in Lichfield, but as there were but few booksellers there, he went every market-day into Birmingham and did business there as well. He was no longer a young man when Samuel was born, and the baby was a great source of pride and delight to him.

Samuel's mother knew nothing about books and was not at all learned, but she was a clever woman in other ways and very religious. As soon as Samuel was able

to understand anything she taught him that heaven was the place to which good people went, and that bad people went to a very different spot.

From the very first the poor baby suffered from a disease called scrofula, or "king's evil," and this hurt his eyes so badly that he became almost blind. In those days people firmly believed that this disease could be cured by the touch of a royal hand, and Samuel's mother made up her mind to take the baby to London and see what Queen Anne could do for him.

Although Samuel was only two and a half years old at that time, he always remembered distinctly how they travelled up in the stage-coach and how much the passengers disliked him because he coughed so much and was so troublesome. Then, too, he had "a sort of solemn recollection of a lady in diamonds and a long black hood," who had graciously laid her hand upon him and the crowd of other people who had come to be cured of the "king's evil."

Sad to say, Queen Anne's royal touch worked no miracle, and Samuel was no better when his mother carried him back to Lichfield. This time they travelled in a waggon to avoid troubling the stage-coach passengers with a sick child, but before starting she bought him a small silver cup and spoon, and that was the only good he got from his visit to London.

As time went on, however, the child grew stronger and soon began to show signs of having a most remarkable mind. He had a wonderful memory and learned so quickly that he was a continual marvel to those who taught him. When still but a child in petticoats he had learned to read. His mother one morning "put the Common Prayer Book into his hands, pointed to the

collect for the day and said, "Sam, you must get this by heart." She went upstairs, leaving him to study it, but by the time she had reached the second floor, she heard him following her. "What's the matter?" said she. "I can say it," he replied, and repeated it distinctly, though he could not have read it more than twice.

Samuel's father by this time began to be quite foolishly proud of his small son, and never lost an opportunity of showing off his cleverness. Sam did not like this at all. It made him feel like a pet dog which is made to sit up and beg and show off his tricks, and so whenever he saw a visitor his plan was to run away and hide himself in a tree to escape notice.

There was no doubt that Samuel was an extremely clever child, but he could scarcely have understood all for which his father gave him credit. Perched on his father's shoulder, he listened gravely to the sermon preached in Lichfield Cathedral by the famous Dr. Sacheverell, and when a friend in the crowd blamed Michael Johnson for bringing such an infant to church, the answer was ready.

"It was impossible to keep him at home," said the proud father; "young as he is, he has caught the public spirit and zeal for Sacheverell."

When Samuel was still very small he was sent to a dame's school in Lichfield, and he soon proved to be the best scholar that Dame Oliver ever had had. He was not at all a good-tempered little boy, however, and he had a very strong will of his own, so it was not always easy to manage him.

As he was too young to go to school by himself, besides being too short-sighted to find his way, a servant was sent every day to take him and fetch him

back. Now it happened one day that the servant was late and had not come by the time Samuel was ready to start for home, and so, taking matters into his own hands, he set out by himself. He was so blind that he had to peer closely down at the path to see where he was going, and when he came to the kennel in the schoolyard he was obliged to go down on his hands and knees to feel it all over that he might know what this great obstacle was.

The schoolmistress was watching him carefully all the time, and was afraid to let him go on alone in case he should lose his way, fall over something, or be run over himself, so she followed at a distance to see that he got along safely. Suddenly, however, he turned and caught sight of her and flew into a great rage, as he felt deeply insulted at being watched. Then he turned and ran back to her, and with all the strength of his puny fists he beat her with all his might.

Although Michael Johnson was not well off, he made up his mind that his clever boy should have the very best education possible, and so when Samuel was eight years old he was sent to the grammar school at Lichfield. There for a time he was well content, for the master was inclined to make much of the boy who learned so quickly and had such a wonderful memory. When, however, after two years he was promoted to the upper school, his troubles began.

The head master was very severe and very fond of using the rod. He believed there was nothing so good for boys as a good birching, and he beat them most unmercifully. Johnson used to say of him afterwards, "He never taught a boy in his life, he whipped and they learned."

Perhaps Samuel may have been whipped more than was necessary, but at the same time it did him a great deal of good, and he quite allowed that without those whippings he would never have learned so much as he did. In spite of all his cleverness he was an extremely lazy boy, and always put off learning his lessons until the last moment. He hated the trouble of writing, too, and his plan was to get some other boy to write down his verses and essays while he dictated them. At the same time he learned so quickly that lessons were really no trouble to him when he was forced to learn them, and the whippings no doubt were meant to spur him on.

"My master whipped me very well," he said in after years. "Without that I should have done nothing."

At games Samuel was no use whatever. Not only was he too lazy to care to play, but his eyesight was too bad to allow him to shine in any sports, and so he would have none of them. The only thing he cared to do out-of-doors was to saunter along through the fields with some admiring schoolfellow to keep him company and listen to all he had to say. It could not have been very lively for the admiring friend, for sometimes Samuel would not even take the trouble to talk, or, worse still, began to indulge in the bad habit of talking to himself.

It was quite extraordinary what an influence he had upon the other boys and how they all tried to win his favour. It was as if he was head and shoulders higher than any of them, and they all looked up to him and admired him.

"From his earliest years," says Boswell, who wrote his great biography, "his superiority was perceived

and acknowledged. He was from the beginning a king of men."

It is difficult to imagine anything less like a king than the great clumsy, lazy boy, but there must have been some strong feeling that made his schoolfellows devoted to him. Every morning three of them came to fetch him to school, and actually carried him all the way.

"One in the middle stooped while he sat upon his back, and one on each side supported him, and thus he was borne triumphant."

By this time Samuel had grown into a large heavy boy, and it was no light weight that his admirers carried, and there must have been some great inducement to make them become such beasts of burden.

In winter time, too, he condescended to be drawn along the ice "by a boy barefooted, who pulled him along by a garter fixed round him: no very easy operation, as his size was remarkably large."

But if Samuel was lazy about most things and not at all keen on games, he was keen enough where reading was concerned. Every book that came his way he devoured, no matter how dull or difficult it was, provided he fancied it, and what he once read he never forgot. When one of his schoolfellows once recited a poem of eighteen verses to him, he repeated it after a pause without one mistake except to vary "an epithet by which he compared the line."

Now Samuel was quite aware of his superiority and was not at all troubled by over-much modesty. Talking one day long afterwards to his friend Boswell about his school-days, he said, "They never thought to praise me by comparing me to anyone, they never said,

'Johnson is as good a scholar as such a one,' but 'Such a one is as good a scholar as Johnson,' and this was said but of one, but of Lowe, and I do not think he was as good a scholar." The desire to be first and to excel in everything he undertook was the best spur to his idle habits.

Perhaps the big awkward boy, with his gloomy violent temper and his good opinion of himself, does not make a very attractive picture, but it must be remembered that he had a kind and generous heart, and that his greatness was never dimmed by any dishonourable act, that "no falsehood was ever spoken, no line opposed to conscience was ever penned by this Colossus of English Literature."

FREDERICK THE GREAT

THERE were great rejoicings at the Prussian court, and thoughout all the Prussian dominions when, on the 24th of January 1712, the news spread like wildfire that a young prince had been born at the palace in Berlin. "Heaven send that he might be a healthy child," was the pious hope of every Prussian heart, for was he not the heir to the throne, after his father, the Crown Prince, and had not the nation's hopes already been twice dashed, by the death of the other two princes born before this one? It made the new prince doubly precious, but in the midst of all the bonfires and rejoicings there were those who shook their heads gloomily over this new hope. The other little brothers had both been so short-lived. The first one had died not long after his christening, having been too much overburdened by the weight of his gorgeous christening robes, and his poor soft little head too deeply indented by the tiny crown that pressed so heavily on his baby brow.

The next hope also vanished but too quickly, he having died, it was thought, of fright caused by the roar of the cannon which thundered out his welcome. True, there had come a princess in between, who was thriving well, but a princess was of small importance to the Prussian nation. All their hopes were fixed on this new-born prince.

The father of the baby, soon to be Frederick II of Prussia, was overjoyed that cold January day when he held his precious little son in his arms. Indeed he held him in such a big loving embrace that the new baby stood a fair chance of being stifled even if he wasn't roasted in the blaze of the huge fire before which his father held him. Luckily a nurse snatched him away in time, having but a poor opinion of such nursing.

The new baby was certainly a small morsel of a thing, but the court was told that it was "of great promise," so the whole nation went wild with joy, and when he was a week old he was christened with the greatest pomp and received the name of Karl Friedrich. Friedrich, Rich-in-Peace, was a family name of the Hohenzollerns, and it was by that name that the baby was to be known, the name to which the world added his splendid title, marking him out as Frederick the Great.

It was no courtly life of ease and luxury that awaited the little prince in the palace of Berlin. His father, Frederick the elder, was a soldier, with a soldier's love of discipline, and he had no patience with luxury or fine French ways. As soon as he became king there was no more money spent on needless extravagance at court, but his one ambition was to make the Prussian army the finest in the world. Idleness and evil ways he punished by law and by the strength of his good right arm, for he was never seen without his rattan, with which he "thrashed his kingdom, his household, and his family into obedience and good order."

Even the apple-women sitting at their stalls in the

street were bidden by the King to employ their time in knitting, and woe betide any idle dame who sat at ease with her hands in her lap if the King happened to pass by and his eye fell upon her.

In spite of all these wild methods of keeping people in order, the little prince's father was a splendid manager, and if he did not allow luxuries for others he himself lived a very simple life. He hated fine clothes and the huge French wigs that were worn then. He disliked silken curtains or stuffed chairs; even carpets were a trial to him, for they harboured dust. To be very clean and neat was all that a soldier and a nation of soldiers should strive after. His wife and her women might want stuffed sofas, for they, poor things, were only women, but for himself he would have polished wood. His food, too, was of the plainest and eaten as quickly as possible.

This then was the father who was planning the upbringing of his small son, when the careful nurse snatched the baby out of his arms, that the first few years of its little life at least might be tended by gentler hands than those of a soldier. The mother, Sophie Dorothea of Hanover, was, it is said, "one of the most beautiful princesses of her day," and the baby was certainly much more like her than his rugged father. She had a gentle loving nature too, and it was pleasant to think that the little prince would have some one to make excuses for him, and even spoil him somewhat, as he grew up under his father's iron rule.

Little Frederick was a lively quick child, "one of the prettiest, vividest little boys, with eyes, with mind and ways of uncommon brilliancy," but inclined to

be rather delicate, so that it was almost a wonder that he managed to battle his way through his childhood, fed on "beer soup" and kept on as short allowance of sleep as any Spartan boy,

For the first seven years of his life Prince Fritz was under the care of women and especially of his governess, the Dame de Roncoulles, who had also been governess to his father, the elder Frederick Wilhelm. The poor lady had had no easy time with her first pupil, and she thanked heaven that this new Frederick was not likely to prove half as troublesome as his father had been. Could she ever forget the day when that first pupil of hers had insisted on putting his shoe-buckles into his mouth, they being shining and to his baby mind good for food? Of course he swallowed one before she could interfere to save it and him. That was bad enough, but a worse shock was in store for her when she one day ordered her small pupil to do something which was not to his mind, and the moment her back was turned he disappeared, and when she looked round all that was to be seen of him was his hands clinging to the sill of the third-story window, while his body dangled outside. There he hung, threatening to drop down at any moment, and refusing to come in until she should come to terms. No, she was thankful to find that this new Frederick was a much easier pupil to deal with, and not at all like his father.

Sometimes, perhaps, it might have been easier for the boy if he had been more like the King, or at least, if he had been more inclined to fall in with his Majesty's ways. As it was, the very fact that he was ordered to do one thing made him long to do another, and before he was seven years

old there had already been battles between father and son.

Now, one of the first things his father planned to give his son pleasure was a miniature soldier company, a regiment of little boys which the prince was to command as soon as he should be drilled and taught a soldier's duty. The seven-year-old colonel was dressed in a tight blue bit of a coat and a cocked hat, as exactly like his father as possible, but there the likeness ended, for little Fritz did not care in the least for soldiers, took no interest in drilling, and had no pride whatever in his smart regiment. He was so much happier playing his flute, and would much rather make music than war.

It was just the same when he went hunting with his father. Frederick Wilhelm was a keen hunter and loved every kind of rough sport, but the boy took no pleasure in it at all, and would always if possible steal away into the forest and hold a concert with some of his companions, who were also musical, and stay and talk with mother and her ladies.

It really looked as if the boy was going to turn out an effeminate fop, thought his father angrily, and yet nothing had been left undone to harden him and turn him out a true Prussian soldier.

As soon as he was seven years old he was taken out of the hands of his governess and put under tutors, and these tutors acted under the strictest rules set by the King himself. His Majesty had chosen his men carefully, and the prince was placed in the special charge of Duhan, a young French gentleman, who was "fonder of fighting than of teaching grammar," therefore a man after the King's own heart.

First of all, the boy was to be taught to fear God, for "God and the King" is the foundation of all Prussian schooling. Then he was to learn arithmetic, mathematics, artillery and economy, a great deal of history, and no Latin whatever. Lastly, writes the King to the two tutors, Finkenstein and Kalkstein, "you have, both of you, in the highest measure, to make it your care to infuse into my son a true love for the soldier business, and to impress on him that, as there is nothing in the world which can bring a prince renown and honour like the sword, so he would be a despised creature before all men, if he did not love it, and seek his sole glory therein."

So much for the tutoring, but the boy's daily life was as carefully mapped out as were his lessons, and these are the rules set forth.

"*Sunday.*—On Sunday he is to rise at seven; and as soon as he has got his slippers on, shall kneel down at his bedside, and pray to God, so as all in the room may hear it. . . . Then rapidly and vigorously wash himself clean, dress and powder and comb himself. Prayer, with washing, breakfast, and the rest to be done pointedly within fifteen minutes."

The breakfast would not take long, for he was only to have some tea, and that was to be drunk while his hair was being combed.

"This finished, all the domestics and Duhan shall come in and do family worship, prayer on their knees, Duhan withal to read a chapter of the Bible, and sing some prayer, psalm, or hymn. It will then be a quarter to eight. All the domestics then withdraw again, and Duhan now reads with my son the Gospel of the Sunday; expounds it a little, adducing the

main points of Christianity; it will then be nine o'clock."

"At nine he brings my son down to me, who goes to church and dines along with me: the rest of the day is then his own. At half-past nine in the evening he shall come and bid me good-night. Shall then directly go to his room; very rapidly get off his clothes, wash his hands; and so soon as that is done Duhan makes a prayer on his knees and sings a hymn; all the servants being again there. Instantly after which my son shall get into bed; shall be *in* bed at half-past ten."

"*Monday.*—On Monday as on all week-days he is to be called at six; and so soon as called he is to rise; you are to stand to him that he do not loiter or turn in bed, but briskly and at once get up and say his prayers, the same as on Sunday morning. This done, he shall as rapidly as possible get on his shoes and spatterdashes; also wash his face and hands, but not with soap. Further shall put on his short dressing-gown, have his hair combed out and greased, but not powdered. While getting combed and greased, he shall at the same time take breakfast of tea, so that both jobs go on at once; and all this shall be ended before half-past six."

Then follows family worship as on Sunday, to be finished by seven o'clock.

"From seven till nine Duhan takes him on history; at nine comes Noltanius with the Christian religion till a quarter to eleven. Then Fritz rapidly washes his face with water, hands with soap and water; clean shirt; powders, and puts on his coat; about eleven comes to the King. Stays with the King till two."

"Directly at two he goes back to his room. Duhan is there ready; takes him upon the maps and geography from two to three—giving account of all the European kingdoms, their strength and weakness, size, riches and poverty of their towns. From three to four, Duhan treats of morality. From four to five, Duhan shall write German Letters with him, and see that he gets a good style. About five, Fritz shall wash his hands and go to the King; ride out; divert himself in the air and not in his room; and do what he likes, if it is not against God."

The rest of the week-days are very much like the Monday, but on Wednesday and Saturday there are half holidays for little Fritz, though he is to forfeit his Saturday holiday if his lessons have not been satisfactory. The directions then end up with one general rule for all days.

"In undressing and dressing you must accustom him to get out of, and into, his clothes as fast as is humanly possible. You will also look that he learn to put on and put off his clothes himself, without help from others; and that he be clean and neat and not dirty."

And now let us look at this boy who has been so carefully trained and instructed. We might expect to see a sturdy soldier-like prince drilled into absolute obedience, fond of his tub, extremely neat and smart.

Alas! Fritz looks rather delicate, not in the least like a soldier, not at all fond of washing, and with a very decided will of his own.

Instead of close-cropped military hair, Fritz likes to wear his locks as long as possible, and even cultivates a

coxcomb. Instead of being proud to lead his regiment, he loves to play the flute and make music.

Truly it was a great disappointment to have such a son, but his Majesty could alter one thing at least. The boy's hair should be cut, and the court barber was immediately summoned, while the King himself looked on and ordered him to crop and club that fair shining hair. Little Fritz should be made to look like a soldier at any rate.

Even at his lessons the boy set himself secretly against his father. He was quick at learning everything, but of course, since Latin was forbidden, it was Latin that he set himself most diligently to learn.

He might have known that his disobedience could not escape the quick eye of his Majesty, and one day when he was hard at work with Latin dictionaries and Latin grammars, laid out on the table, with a copy of the *Golden Ball*, in walked the King and demanded to know what he was doing.

"Your Majesty, I am explaining Aurea Balla (Golden Ball) to the prince," answered the trembling tutor.

"Dog!" roared the King, "I will Golden Ball you!" and down came his Majesty's stick with a whack across his shoulders.

That was the worst thing about the King's strict rules, they taught the boy to be secretly disobedient, and when his disobedience was found out, there was war between father and son, although the mother did her best to screen and defend her son.

But in spite of it all, Frederick grew up with a fine sense of truth and honour, and the strict training was good for him. He was indeed a disappointment to his father, who called him a piper and a poet and no soldier,

but that was a great deal the father's own fault. He had tried to stamp the new little coin with his own impress, so that the boy might be as like him "as a little sixpence is like a half crown," but when it turned out, as Carlyle says, that the new coin had a stamp of its own "that will never be the half crown your Majesty requires," he did not recognise that it was a golden piece of greater value than any that had yet been given to the Prussian nation.

THOMAS CARLYLE AND JANE WELSH

The village of Ecclefechan lies in the low pleasant district of Annandale, about sixteen miles north of Carlisle. It is a quiet grey little village, clean and orderly, but with a cold "dour" look, not unlike the village folk themselves. There are no gardens or flowers to be seen, only rows of whitewashed cottages, with doorsteps leading on to the cobblestones, and a burn running down the middle of the street.

All those whitewashed cottages with their clean red doorsteps look very much alike, but there is one which rather stands out from the rest, for it is a double house with an archway joining the two parts together. Here it was that on December 4th, 1795, Thomas Carlyle was born.

The Carlyles were an old Border family, who took their name, it is thought, from the town of Carlisle. In olden days they had been bold Border raiders, knights and soldiers, but time and misfortune had brought them low, and the family which now bore the name had a hard struggle to win their way along.

The old house with the archway had been built by James Carlyle and his brother with their own hands, they having both learned the trade of masons, although in their earlier days they had lived a wild free life, hunting like Indians, tracking down game and making a living out of the hares they caught. For a hare's skin could be sold for sixpence, and its flesh provided

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them with a good meal, and a good meal counted for a great deal with the hungry lads.

Those days were now left behind, and it was a respectable, fairly well-to-do family that lived at Ecclefechan, and although little Thomas ran about barefooted with the other bairns, and seldom had anything but porridge, milk, and potatoes for his food, it was a healthy, wholesome life, and there was little to complain of.

It was, however, not a cheerful or joyous kind of childhood for Thomas, the eldest boy, or for the six brothers and sisters who followed him. The father, James Carlyle, was a stern, silent man, of whom the children stood greatly in awe. There was no merry chatter, no fun nor telling of idle tales in their father's presence, and there was a silence about the house which made it exceedingly gloomy as well as quiet. No one was expected to talk unless they had something worth saying, and if Thomas chanced to make some childish inaccurate remark, he was frozen by his father's look and his cold "I don't believe thee."

But if his father was a terror to the little silent boy, his mother was all that was loving and tender, and his tongue would go fast enough when he found her alone, always ready to listen, always understanding, and always patient. Perhaps she too stood in awe of her stern husband and grew quiet and silent, but although she was as deeply religious as he was, she had a gayer, happier nature, and was full of quiet humour.

"To her care for my body and soul," said Thomas Carlyle in after years, "I owe endless gratitude."

It was she who taught him to read when he was still such a tiny boy that he could not remember when he began, and then when he was five he learned arithmetic

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with his father and was sent with the other village children to the village school.

Like most of the Carlyles, Thomas had a violent temper, and almost the first thing he remembered distinctly was throwing his little brown stool at his step-brother's head, when he was two years old, and breaking off one of its legs. Sorrow for his badness and grief for his broken stool mingled equally together then.

Sundays were very strictly observed in the little Scottish village, and all children of reasonable years were expected to walk soberly along to the meeting-house, and there to sit as quiet as mice and as wide awake as possible during the long hours of the service and sermon, helped sometimes by the slow sucking of a peppermint. The meeting-house was only a little heather-thatched cottage, not large enough to hold a big congregation, but people walked many miles to hear the minister preach, and on stormy days there was a fine array of dripping plaids hung up to dry inside the door.

Little Thomas never forgot those Sunday sermons in the thatched cottage. Sitting by his mother's side, he watched silently and with deep interest the faces of all the people gathered there, noting especially an eager handsome boy who walked all the way from Annan, and the rugged faces of the older men, full of character, intent and earnest, while the minister, "like an evangelist in modern vesture, thundered out his soul-stirring message."

"That poor temple of my childhood," Carlyle afterwards said, "is more sacred to me than the biggest cathedral."

It was one of those old earnest-faced men, "tall, straight, very clean always, brown as mahogany, and

with a beard as white as snow," of whom a story is told which shows us what kind of men they were among whom Thomas Carlyle spent his childhood.

This old David Hope had a small farm by the Solway shore, a part of the country where farming was difficult and harvests late. It was always a hard matter to get the harvests in, for often when the rain stopped there followed a furious storm of wind which swept everything before it. Then came a few gleams of sunshine, when the farmer worked with all his might to save as much of the corn as possible.

One day when David's corn was ready and the household was having a hasty breakfast of porridge before beginning to "lead in," a messenger came running to the farm. "Such a ragin' wind has risen as will drive the stacks into the sea if let alone," he panted.

But David was putting on his spectacles to begin family worship, and showed no signs of hurry.

"Wind," he repeated, "wind canna' get ae straw that has been appointed mine. Sit down and let us worship God."

These kind of people set a great value on education for their children, and in most families their greatest ambition was that one at least of the sons should be a "scholar."

The stern silent father of the Carlyle household had secretly watched his boy Thomas, and had come to the conclusion that he was worth educating. The schoolmaster gave a good report of his "figures," and the minister said he was doing well with his Latin, so to the Annan Grammar School Thomas was sent.

Thomas at ten years old was a shy, thoughtful

boy with little liking for rough companions, but with a temper as fierce and hot as when he hurled his stool at his brother's head. Many an anxious hour did his mother spend thinking of that passionate temper of his, and before he left for school she made him promise her that he would never hit back when he received a blow.

Clever boys, especially those who possess the heaven-sent gift of genius, are seldom liked by the ordinary commonplace schoolboy. It is difficult to understand a genius, and boys don't like things they can't understand, so, unless the clever boy can defend himself by the strength of his good right arm, he has not an easy time amongst his persecutors.

It was an unlucky thing for Thomas Carlyle that his mother should have bound him by that promise, for it left him at the mercy of the rough school bullies, and for a long time he was as wretched and unhappy as a boy could be.

He had started for school with such high hopes and splendid ambitions. The whole world seemed flooded with sunshine that Whitsuntide morning when he trotted along by his father's side and entered the main street of Annan as the clock struck eight, eager to begin his school life. As they walked up the road of the little town a small dog rushed past them, mad with terror, having a tin kettle tied to its tail. Thomas was sorry for the dog, but there was no time to set it free. Little did he guess that much the same kind of misery was now awaiting him at the hands of those "human imps," his schoolfellows.

He kept his promise to his mother most faith-

fully, and though he longed with all his heart to give back blow for blow, he steadily refused to fight. This went on for some time, and any boy who knows what it feels like to be called a coward, can well understand what that boy, with his passionate temper, must have suffered.

At last, however, he could stand it no longer. Suddenly one day he turned upon the biggest bully of the school, and all his pent-up rage burst forth, lending his arm such strength that the astonished bully had all the breath knocked out of his body and bore the marks of his thrashing for many a long day. After that life was a little more endurable for Thomas Carlyle, but at best he always talked of his school-days as a wretched and unhappy time.

As far as lessons were concerned Thomas made good use of his opportunities, and he devoured every book he could find. Latin and French he soon learned to read with ease, and he did thoroughly well at arithmetic and algebra. His father was satisfied, and when, at thirteen, Thomas left the Grammar School, there was a talk of sending him to the University of Edinburgh.

It was a grave question, not to be settled in a hurry, for it meant many sacrifices for the rest of the family if the University fees were to be paid for Thomas. The neighbours thought the idea a foolish one.

"Educate a boy," said one, "and he grows up to despise his ignorant parents."

Others talked of the risk and the waste of money, and said it was scarcely fair to spend so much on one child when there were all the others to be provided for.

But James Carlyle was not one to be influenced by his neighbours' opinions, and after thinking it well over, he came to the conclusion that little Tom was worth the risk and the sacrifice, and so at the next term the boy set out to begin his University life.

He was a mere boy not yet fourteen, but in those days young boys entered the University, and Thomas was quite able to take care of himself. He knew very well how much depended upon him and how carefully he must live, and to begin with, as there was no money for coach hire, he must walk all the way to Edinburgh, nearly a hundred miles, while his clothes, and the two sacks of oatmeal and potatoes, were sent by the carrier.

A boy two or three years older than himself was returning also on foot to the University, so Thomas was put under his charge, and one dark frosty November morning the journey was begun.

There were few words spoken at parting, for Thomas was as silent as ever. His father and mother walked with him through the village to set him on his way, but there would be little show of feeling when they bade him good-bye. His father's stern eye did not encourage unnecessary farewells, but his mother must have watched him go with an ache in her heart, and no doubt Thomas saw in her loving tender eyes what she could not put into words.

All the world seemed now to lie before the boy as he walked across the moors, "given up to his bits of reflections, in the silence of the hills," and his mother, as she watched him disappear and turned herself homewards, was "wae" to think of her boy

going off alone into the great world of temptation and trial. But she need not have been afraid. The boy's strong character, his hatred for all shams, his love for all that was true and noble and beautiful, protected him in the battle of life as if he had possessed some knightly armour.

Perhaps like most mothers she looked forward to her first-born winning fame and honour, but even she could not have dreamed that the roughly clad village boy, whom she watched disappearing into the morning mist, had already his feet set firmly on the path which was to lead him to such honours and renown as would win him a place among the great men of the earth.

JANE WELSH

It was when Thomas Carlyle was still a small boy of six, running barefoot about the village of Ecclefechan, that a little maid was born at Haddington, who in after years was to link her life to his with a golden wedding-ring.

Janet Welsh was a very dainty little lady, living in a charming home, surrounded by every care that love and money could procure. She was the only child of Dr. Welsh and his wife Grace Welsh, and her parents were proud to trace their descent from Wallace and Knox, so their daughter had every right to show some decided character.

Such a fairy-like little maiden must have had the

fairies bidden to her christening, and if so they had certainly brought her more gifts than they usually bestowed on mere mortals. She was a very beautiful child, with black hair and large black eyes, in which there lurked a hint of fairy mocking laughter, and her figure was so slight and graceful, that Carlyle says she must have been "the prettiest little Jenny Spinner that was dancing on the summer rays in her time." So much for the gifts of outward appearance, but she had beside a beautiful nature and a wonderful mind.

Although she was an only child, she was not spoilt, for rules were strictly laid down in the doctor's household, and his daughter was taught to be unquestioningly obedient. She might be wilful at times, but her father's word was law, and she loved him with all the strength of her child's heart. Like a veritable sunbeam she kept the old home bright and gay, and it would have been as impossible to be stern with a sunbeam as with this dancing sprite of a child.

Always welcome wherever she went, she did not know what shyness meant, and she was besides a very self-possessed little lady and always knew how to behave. It was when she was only six years old that she appeared in public at a party given by the dancing schoolmistress, and quite distinguished herself.

It was a very grand party indeed, and rather a solemn occasion, for all the papas and mammas of the pupils were bidden, and there was to be a great display of dancing steps, while Jeanie was chosen to perform a dance all by herself.

That dance was to be the crowning event of the

evening, and Jeanie's heart was filled with a good deal of secret anxiety, as she was very anxious to make no mistakes, and it was a most difficult as well as elegant *pas seul*.

Dressed in dainty garments, the little maid, in all the bravery of silken skirts and sandal shoes, was propped into a clothes-basket and carried across to the party in state, the roads being muddy and there being no carriage.

Shaking out her skirts when her turn came, she stood poised with one toe pointed ready to begin, but alas, the music that struck up was not the right music at all; the tune was all wrong, and it was impossible to dance to it. Jeanie shook her head and the music stopped. Again it was tried, and still it was hopelessly wrong. The event of the evening was about to prove a failure!

All the papas and mammas looked on, all the other children stared round-eyed, and the sprite stood there in the middle of the room "alone against the world, forsaken by the music." There was a dreadful pause, and then, with the fairy laughter glittering in her eyes, the child looked up, caught her little skirt in both hands and flung it over her head, and curtseying behind its veil, "withdrew from the audience amidst great applause."

Lessons were never any trouble to this child, indeed it was difficult to give her enough to learn, for she always wanted more, and it was not long before she demanded to be allowed to "learn Latin like a boy." Her mother thought that little girls should be taught music and drawing and modern languages, and should not want to learn boys' lessons, but her father, who was

proud of her quickness, was inclined to let her have her own way.

In the end, however, Jeanie settled the matter herself by making friends with a boy in Haddington who taught her the nouns of the first declension, and when she had learned these by heart she secretly laid her plans.

One evening when everyone supposed the child was in bed, there was a mouse-like sound under the drawing-room table and a small voice was heard to recite from underneath the tablecloth, "*Penna*, a pen; *pennæ*, of a pen," and then a little figure crept out, and taking no notice of the laughter that greeted her, Jeanie ran into her father's arms and eagerly burst out, "I want to learn Latin, please let me be a boy."

That settled the question. There was a school close by where boys and girls were taught together, and to this school Jeanie was sent to learn Latin, even if it was impossible to learn to be a boy. Very unlike a schoolboy did the little maiden look as she tripped along to school dressed in a light blue pelisse fastened with a black belt, and "dainty little cap, perhaps of beaver-skin with flap turned up, with a modest little plume in it."

The sprite with all her sweetness and gentleness had a very fiery temper and a most determined character, and the other children soon found this out.

The boys and girls at school were usually taught in different rooms, but Jeanie was sometimes allowed to learn her lessons in the boys' room, as she was so eager to learn all that they did. The boys were all devoted to her, but sometimes of course there were quarrels, and one day a boy was impertinent to her

little ladyship. In a flash Jeanie doubled up her small fist and struck the offender straight on the nose, so that it immediately began to bleed.

Now there was a rule in school that no fighting was allowed, and anyone who broke that rule was flogged, so there was widespread dismay when at that very moment a master walked in, and seeing the bleeding nose, demanded to be told at once who had struck the blow.

There was dead silence; not one of the boys would be so mean as to "tell on" a girl.

"Very well," said the master, "if no one will confess, the whole school shall get the tawse."

Then at last a very small voice was uplifted.

"Please, sir, it was I," and Jeanie stood up and faced the angry master.

Again there was a silence. The master tried to keep grave, but first of all a smile spread over his face and then he burst out laughing, as he told her she was "a little deevil" and had no business there. "Go your ways into the girls' room," he said, smiling down on the demure little figure.

Soon after this a new schoolmaster came to take charge of the Haddington school. He was Edward Irving, the same eager-faced boy who used to walk so far to the meeting-house at Ecclefechan when Thomas Carlyle sat there by his mother's side.

This new schoolmaster took a great interest in the clever little girl with her beautiful face and dainty, winsome ways, and it must indeed have been a pleasure to teach a child who was so keen about her lessons. Every morning at five o'clock Jeanie was up and dressed, ready to begin her books, quick and eager

to learn all she could. It was not long before she was dux of the school in mathematics.

But mathematics was not what she loved best. Of all her lessons, those that made most impression on her were her Latin books, especially Virgil. They were not merely lesson books; there was something in them that influenced all her thoughts and actions.

When she was tempted to do a selfish or cowardly thing, she did not say to herself, as she might once have done, "If you do this you will not go to heaven hereafter," or even "If you do this you will be whipt here," but instead came the thought, "A Roman would not have done it," and that was quite enough to keep her straight and brave. Again, if she did any courageous action, when, for instance, she bravely caught a gander by the throat and flung it out of her path when it beset her with its fierce hissing, she was not specially proud of the half-crown which was bestowed upon her as a reward for her courage, but rather the thought that the Roman Republic would have approved filled her with satisfaction.

All this went steadily on until a tragedy occurred. Someone "whose wish was law," most likely her master, Edward Irving, had pointed out that a child who read Virgil should be ashamed of playing with dolls, and she immediately made up her mind that her beloved doll should be sacrificed.

That doll was to have no common end, however; it was to die as befitted the doll of a "young lady in Virgil," and was to perish as did Queen Dido.

A funeral pyre was made of a few bundles of cedarwood, some sticks of cinnamon, a few cloves and a nutmeg, and upon this was placed the doll's

four-posted bed and all its treasured garments. Then the new Dido was placed upon the bed, and through the mouth of her small mistress spoke her dying speech, and with some assistance set fire to the pyre and stabbed herself with a penknife.

So far all had gone well, and the heroic Roman mother had rather enjoyed the sacrifice, but when the flames actually reached her beloved doll and Dido began to blaze, all the motherly affection awoke, and she, forgetting she was a Roman matron, burst into tears, and tried to snatch the victim from the burning heap. It was too late, however, for Dido was stuffed with bran and burnt away merrily, while the poor little executioner was carried off weeping and wailing in a most unheroic manner.

There were no more tragedies after that until she grew older, and then she took to verse-making, for which she had a great gift.

The *Tragedy* written at that time was a wonderful piece of work for a child of that age, but it was her first and last attempt.

Poor little maiden, with her make-believe tragedies. So many real tragedies awaited her in after life that the memory of her sunny childhood days were always precious to her, and the story of them a delight to her grave, silent husband, whose boyhood had lacked all the graciousness and happiness that had surrounded his "little Jeanie."

GEORGE WASHINGTON

WHO does not know the story of George Washington and his little hatchet? His very name recalls sad memories of a time when, having wandered from the path of truth, we were told the tale of the little boy who said, "Father, I cannot tell a lie, I cut the cherry-tree with my little hatchet."

We did not love George Washington then, and from the land of memory comes the echo of a rebellious little voice declaring, "I hate him and his horrid little hatchet —I wish he had never been born."

But born he was, and besides acting as a good example to untruthful children, he lived to be a very great and very good man, and there is no name in America more honoured or loved than his.

Now George Washington, although he is known as the Great American and America's first President, was English by descent. His great grandfather, finding that England was no longer a pleasant land to live in with Cromwell as ruler, left his home and sailed across the ocean, with his brother, and settled in Virginia. The great grandson of this Englishman, little George Washington, was born in 1732, and by that time the Washington family had lived and flourished in Virginia for seventy-five years, although they still called themselves English, and thought of England as "home."

When little George was five years old his father

moved from Pope's Creek, where the child had been born, and went to live on another of his estates on the Rappahannock River. It was a splendid country, with great unbroken forests stretching out to east and west, and broad rivers winding their way through fertile fields. In these great forests, standing so thick with trees that scarce a gleam of sunshine could creep in to lighten the dim green twilight, all kinds of birds and beasts had their home, and in the shadowy stillness there were other moving forms besides the animals that crept quietly and stealthily about. These forests were the hunting ground of the Indians, and their canoes, too, might be seen shooting about the rivers. As yet they were quite friendly towards the white family who had come to settle so close to them, but at any moment they might become enemies.

Every now and then news would come from other parts of the country telling of terrible deeds done by the Indians to the white settlers, and George would listen to these tales of cruelty and treachery until it was difficult to feel quite brave, and not to be afraid.

English boys and girls safe at home love the exciting stories of the Redskins on the warpath and the fascinating description of their clever cunning, but it was a different matter for George when those same Indians were lurking in the forests close by, stealing like silent shadows across his path, noiseless and mysterious in their ways as the forest animals themselves.

But there were pleasant open places around the house for George to play in, without wandering into the shadows of the great forests. There was an apple orchard, besides the garden and fields, and in springtime it was a veritable fairyland with its sea of pale

pink blossoms against the blue sky. That was very beautiful to look at, but it was in autumn that George loved the orchard best, for then the trees were loaded with great rosy-cheeked apples and the ground beneath was covered with equally delicious "tumble-downs."

George had gone one day to the orchard with his father and two of his cousins, and the sight of the apples made him dance with joy.

"Father," he cried, "did you ever in all your life see so many apples before?"

"There are certainly a great many," answered his father. "Don't you remember what I told you in spring when your cousin gave you a large apple, and you wanted to eat it all up yourself, instead of sharing it with your brothers and sisters? I told you then that you should be generous and God would send us many more apples in the autumn."

George hung his head. He remembered quite well, and the sight of all these apples made him ashamed of himself now. It was not very easy to own that he had been greedy, and that he was sorry, but he was a good fighter and presently he won the victory. "I am sorry now, father," he said, "and if you'll forgive me this time, you'll see if I'll ever be stingy again."

That was the kind of lesson his father wanted him to learn, and it was the sort of teaching that George never forgot.

When spring came George was much excited one day, when he went into the garden to find that the cabbage-bed had begun to show green shoots, and that the green formed the letters of his own name, "George Washington." He stood for a few moments quite

silent, his eyes and mouth wide open in astonishment. Surely it must be magic!

"Father, father!" he shouted; "O father! do come and see."

"What is the matter?" asked his father.

"The cabbages are coming up, and are writing out my name," cried George.

"Very curious," said his father.

"But who did it?" asked George.

"I suppose they just grew so," said his father; "don't you think they came up that way by chance?"

"They couldn't," said George; "they wouldn't know how to grow that way unless someone had made them."

"You are quite right," said his father. "Nothing grows by chance. I planted those cabbages in that way on purpose to teach you that very lesson. There are some people who say that everything grows by chance, but that is impossible. There is someone who plans everything. All the thousands of good things you enjoy, the sunshine and the flowers, eyes to see with, ears to hear with, feet to carry you about, all are planned by God, and chance has nothing to do with it."

George was only eight years old when he learned that lesson, but he never forgot it all the rest of his life.

It was about this time that George was given the little hatchet which has become so famous. He had gone about the garden chopping any old pieces of wood he could find, when his eye fell on a beautiful English cherry-tree, and this seemed the very thing on which to try his new present. So he chopped away with

great enjoyment until not only the bark was off but the wood underneath was hacked and cut into pieces.

Next day his father happened to pass by that way and caught sight of his favourite cherry-tree. He was very angry when he saw the mischief that had been done, and he went back immediately to ask everyone in the house if he or she knew who had done it.

"My beautiful cherry-tree is utterly ruined," he said; "who could have hacked it in that way?"

No one knew anything about it. None of the servants had been near the tree.

"I wouldn't have taken five guineas for it," said Mr. Washington sorrowfully.

Just then George came wandering in, his hatchet in his hand.

"George," said his father sternly, "do you know who has killed that cherry-tree in the garden?"

Now George until that moment had never thought that he had harmed the tree, but hearing his father's voice and seeing his troubled face, the child suddenly realised the mischief he had done, and hung his head. "George, did you do it?" asked his father. It was all very frightening. He was only a very little boy, and his father was very angry, and the whole household waited to hear what he had to say for himself. It was not easy to be brave, but George manfully lifted his head and looked straight at his father.

"I can't tell a lie, father," he said; "I did cut it with my hatchet."

So the boy spoke out bravely and truly, risking the consequences, although he need not have been afraid, for his father would rather have lost a hundred cherry-trees than that his little son should have told one lie.

It was only right that a boy who came of a soldierly race, and who meant himself to be a soldier some day, should learn the truest bravery of all. It was a better preparation for him even than drilling his companions and fighting mimic battles, as he was so fond of doing. His big brother Laurence had joined the army and gone away to fight King George's battles against the Spaniards, and George wished with all his heart that he too was old enough to wear a uniform and carry a sword.

The sight of the soldiers as they marched past to the music of the band, the sound of martial drums and the waving of the English banner made his heart beat with excitement and loyalty, and he made up his mind he would be a soldier as his great-grandfather had been. Little did he think as he watched the soldiers march past, that when his time should come it would be under another flag that he would be fighting, against that England which he still thought of as his own country.

But all this was still in the future, and meanwhile George went steadily on, learning all he could both at school and at home. He was as upright and brave and truthful as a boy could be, and besides that he learned the magic of method, so that he got through far more work than most boys could manage. His masters soon discovered that he was no ordinary boy, and they felt sure that a great future was in front of him. As his brother Laurence said, "If a bright springtime is the harbinger of an ample harvest, such a youth must foreshadow noble manhood."

GOETHE

JOHANN CASPAR GOETHE, imperial councillor of Frankfort, was a stern, stately man, no longer in his first youth, when he brought home to the old house in the Grosse Hirschgraben his bride of seventeen summers, Katharina Elizabeth, the daughter of the chief magistrate Johann Wolfgang Textor.

It was a great change for the young bride, who was still scarcely more than a child. She had spent a happy life in her father's house, with little or no responsibility, and now that was all left behind her and she was the wife of this stern, stately man, more than double her age, who made her feel as if she was still at school when he set her lessons to learn and tried to improve her mind.

Little wonder, then, that when a year later her baby was born she welcomed him with delight, and felt as if she and her little son were much nearer in age than the solemn husband who was so full of wisdom and knowledge.

It was in summer-time, on 28th of August 1749, that little Johann Wolfgang Goethe was born, exactly as the clocks were striking midday. The people of Frankfort-on-the-Main were not at all interested in the arrival of the baby in the old house in the Grosse Hirschgraben, but the stars, it is said, were wiser and knew that it was no ordinary child that had just come

into the world, and foretold for him a golden future full of honour and renown.

Of course to his mother he was the most wonderful baby that had ever been born, and certainly he was so quick and clever, even when a little child, that there was some excuse for her pride in him. And surely no child ever had a more charming and delightful mother as playfellow. She had such a sunny, unselfish nature, that she was always happy herself, and always tried to make others happy. Her eyes only looked for all that was best in other people, and fault-finding was unknown to her. Black thoughts had no place in her gay, loving heart, and she had a marvellous way of smoothing out difficulties and making the rough places plain. All beautiful things were a joy to her, and she shared all her pleasures with her little son, and could tell him such wonderful fairy tales that while he listened he seemed to be living in an enchanted land.

So little Wolfgang began very early to take delight in what was fair and lovely, and to dislike all ugly things. This was all very well, as far as it went, but it was not convenient when he refused to play with children unless they were pretty. He was but three years old when he was once taken to visit a neighbour where there happened to be a dark and extremely plain child waiting to play with him. Wolfgang burst into tears and pointed a shaking finger at him.

"That black child must go away," he sobbed, "I cannot bear him."

Needless to say it was Wolfgang who was taken away, and not the black child, and he had to learn the most necessary lesson of self-control.

A little sister, Cornelia, came soon to share his

pleasures and be his playmate, and he loved the baby so devotedly that he brought all his toys for her to play with, and sat like a little watch-dog by her cradle. Some other little brothers followed, but none of them lived very long, and it was only Wolfgang and Cornelia who lived to grow up the greatest of friends.

It was a curious old house where the brother and sister played their games and learned their lessons together. It had so many gloomy passages and dark corners that it was by no means a cheerful place, even in the daytime, when the sun shone through the round glass windows, and the cheerful voices of the servants could be heard. But at night it was so gloomy and so terrifying that the children lay in their little lonely beds and shivered with fear. It was no use asking that someone might stay near them. Their father declared that children must be taught to fear nothing and to grow accustomed to darkness and mystery.

Sometimes the terror was more than Wolfgang could bear, and then he would step out of bed and creep along to try and find some maid or servant to keep him company. But his father never failed to hear the patter of those small bare feet, and his way of trying to make his little son more courageous was not a happy one.

Wolfgang, creeping cautiously along, was suddenly met by a dreadful unknown figure so much more terrifying than even his lonely bed, that he turned to fly and dared not venture forth again. How could he recognise in the dim light that the dreadful figure was merely his father, who had turned his dressing-gown inside out to furnish a disguise?

The gay, tender-hearted young mother found a

much better way of helping the children to overcome their fears and to be brave during the dark hours of the night. She could not go against their father's wishes, but as it was the time for peaches, and peaches were a great treat, she thought of a splendid plan. Every night when they went to bed, she told them to try and be brave and good, and if they did their very best there would be a dish of velvet-cheeked peaches ready for them in the morning. The very thought of those peaches was like a magic spell to keep away the powers of darkness.

The room which the children loved best in all the house was the large room on the ground floor where their grandmother lived. There was always a welcome awaiting them there, and if their father was strict, his mother did her very best to spoil them. In her room they could play at any games they liked and it did not matter how noisy they were, and then she was like a fairy godmother with her surprising gifts, and the sugar-plums and dainty morsels which always appeared like magic to fill their hungry little mouths.

Many were the pleasures she prepared for them, but the greatest joy of all was the puppet show she gave them one Christmas Eve. There was a tiny stage and little figures all complete and a play to be acted. Wolfgang was wild with delight. It was like a fairy gift to him, and it opened the gates of another enchanted land.

But life was by no means made up of fairy tales and puppet shows for the little boy. There were many serious duties to be performed and many lessons to be mastered. The learned councillor had very decided ideas about the education of children, and he began

early to teach them himself. As soon as they were old enough to learn anything, Wolfgang and Cornelia had their days filled with studies of different kinds. There was very little time for play, and even playtime was often taken up with instructive pleasure, such as feeding and tending silk-worms, or helping to bleach valuable old etchings. The evenings were even worse sometimes, for then they had to read aloud from some book, so dull and instructive that even their father occasionally dropped asleep as he listened.

Then, oh! joy and rapture, there was a chance of escape from the dull prison-house into fairyland. They knew their mother would have a story ready for them, in fact, there was almost always one in the making, and they were wild with interest to hear the next part. Wolfgang, especially, lived in her stories.

"He fairly devoured me with his big black eyes," said his mother, "and when the fate of some favourite character was not just to his liking, I saw the veins of his forehead swelling with anger, while he tried to keep back his tears."

It was all so real to him that sometimes he could not help interrupting, especially if he was afraid things were not going to turn out as he wished.

"Mother" he urged, "the princess will not marry that horrid tailor, will she? Not even if he does kill the giant?"

"Wait and see" was all that his mother would say, and then Wolfgang would go and whisper to his grandmother the ending that he hoped would follow. She always listened patiently, and when the children were in bed repeated the child's ideas to the chief story-teller to weave into her tale.

Great was Wolfgang's delight when next time the story went on exactly as he wanted it to do.

"I guessed it," he cried, his cheeks burning with excitement, and his little heart thumping with delight.

But although Wolfgang loved his mother's stories so well, he did not specially dislike his lessons, and he was a pupil after his father's own heart. Learning of every kind came easy to him, and the wonder was that the child could do work of all kinds so well. Latin he learned easily because his first Latin book rhymed, and he could hum and sing it to himself like a song. There was very little difficulty in teaching him any language. Greek, Hebrew, French, his ear caught them all quickly and easily. English he learned in four weeks from a travelling English tutor, and Italian seemed to him such a "funny language" that he learned it by merely listening to the lessons given to his sister. He had his own work to do in the same room, and as Cornelia was taught Italian he listened too, and learned it quite as quickly as she did.

There were not many books for children to read in those days, but among the ones he had, Wolfgang was never tired of *Robinson Crusoe* and the Bible. Certainly the Bible was his chief favourite, especially the stories in the Old Testament of the simple shepherd folk, and he loved, too, the rhythm of the grand old Psalms. It was the book his mother loved best of all, and she used to tell him that all the wisdom of the world was to be found there.

On the second floor of the old house, there was a room called "the garden room," because a few plants had been set to grow there, and this was Wolfgang's favourite retreat. It was a quiet place in which to

learn his lessons, and read his books and dream his dreams. Kneeling on the window-seat, he could look out of the window over the gardens and the city wall, across to the beautiful valley of the Main and the mountains beyond. It was possible to watch from afar the great storms gathering and sweeping up the valley, like a host advancing in battle array, and at eventide there was the glory of the sunset to watch and wonder at. All these things were silently woven into the web of the child's life and never forgotten.

Very soon after that Christmas Eve which had brought the delight of the puppet show, the kind old grandmother died, and then the councillor decided to rebuild the old house, which he had not cared to do while his mother was alive. It was not pulled to pieces at once, but rebuilt story by story, so that the family were able to stay there most of the time and watch the rebuilding.

To the children all this was a delightful pleasure. Wolfgang, dressed as a little bricklayer, helped to lay the foundation-stone, and was never tired of watching the men at their work and learning how a house should be built. There was the joy, too, of playing at see-saw on the planks with his sister and swinging on the beams until he was giddy.

But at last, when it was time for the roof to be taken off, it was quite impossible to stay in the house any longer, and so until it should be finished the children were sent away to school for the first and last time in their lives. Wolfgang did not like school at all. It was so ugly and disagreeable, the boys were so rough and rude, and they bullied him unmercifully.

Perhaps it was but natural that the new boy should

receive little mercy at the hands of his companions. His superior manners and the way that he walked with his head in the air were most irritating, especially in so small a boy.

Wolfgang certainly carried himself with rather a grand air. Once when his mother had watched him cross the road with some other boys, she laughed to see his grave and stately manner of walking, and asked him if he meant in that way to distinguish himself from his companions.

"I *begin* with this," he answered gravely. "Later on in life, I shall distinguish myself in other ways."

It was enough to make anyone smile to see the little five-year-old boy draw himself up and answer with such dignity. He had been always rather impressed with the tale of what the stars had foretold at his birth, and he asked his mother gravely if she thought they would help him towards that golden future.

"Why must you have the assistance of the stars?" she said; "other people get on very well without."

"I am not to be satisfied with what does for other people," was Wolfgang's answer.

Such a boy naturally suffered a great deal at the hands of the school bullies, but they did not quite realise what kind of a child it was that they were persecuting, or his wonderful power of self-command.

Fighting during lesson hours was strictly forbidden at school, and it happened one day that the teacher was absent and the boys were playing instead of working, when they found the new boy learning his lessons by himself, and they determined to make him break the rule. A broom was found and three of the

boys made switches and began cutting and lashing at Wolfgang's legs until the pain was almost more than he could bear. Quite unmoved he sat on, keeping one eye on the clock, while his anger grew hotter and hotter with each smarting blow; then at last the hour struck, and he was free to fight. In an instant he was on his feet, and so powerful was his rage that before the bullies knew what was happening, two of them were hurled backwards on to the floor and the third was nearly throttled. Wolfgang needed no stars to help him in that fight.

The only thing that made his schooldays pleasant to him, was that he was now free to wander about the town by himself, and could learn a great deal about the townsfolk and their work, and the history of the old buildings. Every kind of knowledge that came his way was welcome to the boy, everything was of interest. He tells us, in his account of his childhood, how he loved to wander out on to the great bridge over the Main and watch the shining river below.

"I always had a pleasant feeling," he says, "when the gilt weathercock on the bridge cross glittered in the sunshine."

Then across the river there was the wine-market, where he could watch the cranes loading and unloading the casks, and see the market-boats coming in with their curious wares.

In the old town there was always a great crowd on market days, and it was most exciting to push a way through the people, and reach at last the book-stalls where children could spend their pennies on books of folk-songs, or coloured paper stamped with

golden animals. The meat-stalls were a great drawback to Wolfgang's pleasure, and he always flew past them and tried not to see them. The pleasant feeling which the shining weathercock had given him was quite gone now.

Frankfort was a curious old town, with its walls and bridges, its ramparts and moats, a fortress enclosing other fortresses, little towns crowded together within the big one. It was all full of interest to Wolfgang, but the Rathhaus especially was a storehouse of delight whenever he could find someone to tell him tales of all that had happened there. It was a never-ending joy to dream of the Kings and Emperors, and picture the coronations which those old walls had seen. The child had always a love for old things, old chronicles and pictures, and the beautiful old curiosities in his father's museum. Venetian glass, carved ivories, bronzes and ancient weapons, they all had taught him to love and reverence the beautiful things of the past, in which his father delighted.

Yet in some ways the present was quite as fascinating to Wolfgang as the past. The everyday work of the craftsman, who made pottery as wonderful as Venetian glass, was as deeply interesting to him as the doings of Kings and Emperors.

The most exciting time of all the year in Frankfort was when the two great fairs were held at Easter and at Michaelmas, and Wolfgang loved to watch the people come flocking in from the outside world, their manners, dress, and ways so different to anything he saw in the old town. It was almost like a huge puppet show, especially the "pipers' court," which he thought was the best show of all.

It was a relic of olden times, when there were so many tolls to pay that the people used to bring gifts to the chief magistrate to persuade him to abate the tax. The custom was still continued, and at the Michaelmas fair-time the magistrates assembled in the Imperial Hall, with the chief magistrate in their midst, one step higher than the rest, ready to receive the burghers' gifts. First came the pipers, dressed in blue mantles trimmed with gold braid, and their queer old instruments; then followed the deputies and attendants.

One by one each deputy stepped forward and presented his offering. There was pepper in a wooden goblet, a pair of gloves curiously slashed and stitched, and tasselled with silk, a white rod, and some small pieces of silver money. There was also an old felt hat brought by the deputy of the city of Worms, but that was always given back again, that it might serve another year.

What made this show so specially interesting to the Goethe children was that their grandfather was the chief magistrate, who sat on the highest seat and received all the curious gifts, and when the show was over it was always possible to make a modest call on him, and perhaps be presented with the wooden goblet, when their grandmother had emptied out the pepper, or the white rod, or one of the silver pieces. The gloves they knew were always kept for their grandfather to wear when he was working in his beloved garden, and pruning his rose bushes.

The chief magistrate's little grandson was a great favourite with all his grandfather's special friends,

and it was little wonder that he grew to be rather stately in his manners, and a little inclined to feel superior. It was not only because the boy was so quick and so clever, that all those learned old men were so fond of him; it was his "goodness and purity" as well, which made him "as refreshing as the morning dew," and tempted them all to do their best to spoil him.

The joyful day arrived at last, when the new house was finished and the children could go home again, much to their satisfaction. It was a much more cheerful house than the old one had been, for now there were scarcely any dark passages and ugly corners, but all was made as light and as beautiful as possible. There was no room for nightly terrors, no lurking-places for cowardly fears now.

But, sad to say, a terror much worse than the old imaginary ones was waiting to seize on Wolfgang very soon after they returned to the new house. It was the year of the terrible earthquake of Lisbon, and all Europe was ringing with the dreadful news, and Wolfgang listened in silent horror to the tale of misery and woe. He had always felt so sure that the good God took care of everybody, and now it seemed as if He could no longer be kind or loving if He allowed such a terrible thing to happen.

Just then, too, a fearful storm swept over the city, and the hailstones broke the new windows and the rain flooded the beautiful new house, while terrified servants made the children almost as frightened as they were themselves.

Wolfgang was only six years old then, and he tried to think things out very seriously, with the

result that, like the people in the Old Testament, he built a little altar to God, just as Noah and Abraham had done after flood and fire.

A year later, when the Seven Years' War broke out, the boy had something else to think about besides earthquakes and floods. To Wolfgang Frederick was the greatest hero that ever lived, and he listened with shining eyes to all that his father told him about the great King, but it was extremely puzzling to find that his grandfather took the side of Austria and had nothing but blame and scornful disdain for Wolfgang's hero.

Here was another puzzle. The Lisbon earthquake had made him doubt the goodness of God, and now he began to doubt the justice of the world.

"He is a strange child," said his mother, at the time when one of his little brothers died, and Wolfgang never shed a tear.

"Did you not love your little brother, then, that you do not grieve for his loss?" she asked.

There was no answer, only Wolfgang turned and slowly went into his own room, and from under his bed brought out a heap of papers, written all over with stories and little lessons in childish handwriting.

"I had written all these that I might teach him," he said.

Ever since the early days when he had invented the endings to his mother's tales, Wolfgang had gone on making up stories and filling his mind with all kinds of poetry, besides the lessons he learned with his father, and these little tales must have been a real labour of love to the boy, who was only now nine years old.

Those strict lesson hours were very much interrupted just then, when the French troops marched into the town, and one of the King's lieutenants was quartered in the councillor's house, to the wrath and dismay of that same councillor. A great deal of life and gaiety came with the French soldiers, and it was impossible to keep the children steadily at work. There was even a theatre opened, and there Wolfgang spent golden hours of pure enjoyment, of which the puppet show had been but a dim foreshadowing.

Of course the first thing to be done now was to write a play, and the play was written, but a friend among the actors thought it very poor stuff, and Wolfgang was discouraged.

He had noticed, when he and his companions made verses together, that however bad the verses were, the boy who had written them thought them splendid and could see no fault in them. He wondered if it could be the same with him. He was so sure the things he did were good, but then he always found there was something better still to be done. Would he ever reach up to the highest?

So he pondered and asked himself many questions, but as yet there was no answer. The flower was very fair, but who could tell them that the fruit was to be so golden and so rare that the whole world was to rejoice in the glorious harvest.

MOZART

THE good fairies must certainly have been very busy around a certain cradle in the old city of Salzburg on the 27th of January 1756, for that was the day on which the little Wolfgang Mozart was born. There seemed no end to the gifts bestowed upon this special child, but most wonderful of all was his gift for music, greater than any fairy gift, for it was the divine touch of genius.

Everything beautiful was a delight to Wolfgang as soon as his eyes learned to look at things and his ears learned to listen. The beautiful old city in which he dwelt, the churches with their slender spires and the splendid palaces, and beyond the snow-capped mountains keeping sentinel like guardian angels, all made life beautiful to the boy. How he loved to stand and watch the great church processions, where the priests in their gold-embroidered vestments swept through the dim aisles of the cathedral! The high altar blazing with a hundred candles, veiled only by the faint haze of blue smoke which wreathed up from the swinging censers below, made him wonder if this was indeed the very gate of heaven, but most glorious of all was the sound of the organ as it swelled through the great cathedral and died away like the echo of angel voices. Little Wolfgang, kneeling there with the holy water still wet on his forehead, felt as if heaven had opened and the music was carrying him upwards upon angels'

wings. But afterwards, when the candles were put out and the music had died away, Wolfgang came quickly back to earth again, and was a very happy ordinary little mortal. Life was so full of sunshine for him, and he had such a happy home, that he did not in the least want to be an angel yet. His father, who was one of the court musicians, in the band of the reigning Archbishop, was one of the kindest and most loving of fathers, and his good-natured, kindly mother still carried about with her much of the calm and peacefulness of her convent training, so that the little household was a very happy one.

Then too there was Nannerl, the elder sister, four years older than Wolfgang, who was always ready to play with him, and whom he loved dearly, although she was not quite such a splendid playfellow as Herr Schachtner, the court trumpeter, whom he adored with all his heart.

There was nothing that Herr Schachtner could not do, and he played the most delightful games, and what was best of all, he always understood that every game must be played to music. Even when they carried the toys from one room to the other, a march was sung or played upon the violin, to make it a real procession.

"Dost thou love me, Herr Schachtner?" Wolfgang would stop to ask every now and then, very anxiously, and sometimes the trumpeter, to tease him, would shake his head.

"No, I love thee not," he said.

Then, seeing the great tears beginning to gather in the child's eyes, he quickly told him it was only a joke, and then the play and the music went on cheerfully again.

WHEN THEY WERE CHILDREN

When Wolfgang was three years old, his father began to teach Nannerl to play the piano, and the little boy always stood near watching his sister, full of wonder and interest. His great delight then was to stand by the piano and pick out "thirds" for himself, until his father, almost in sport, began to give him lessons too. Then it was that his great gift first began to be noticed. He could learn a minuet in less than half an hour, and once learned, he played it without one fault and in perfect time. It was all the more wonderful because his tiny hands could only stretch a few notes, but it seemed indeed as if some magic dwelt in those small fingers.

Soon it was seen that Wolfgang's head was as full of magic as his hands, and when he was five years old he began to compose music himself, writing down the notes without looking at the piano. His father and Herr Schachtner, coming home together from mass one day, found the boy very busy with paper, pen, and ink, and asked him what he was doing.

"I am writing a pianoforte concerto," answered Wolfgang, looking up, "it is nearly finished."

His father smiled at the important little face and the very inky fingers.

"Let me see it," he said.

"It is not quite finished," said Wolfgang.

"Show it to me," said his father; "no doubt it is something very fine."

Now Wolfgang always dug his pen into the very bottom of the ink-pot, and so of course a large blot ran off each time the pen touched the paper. Naturally the only thing then to be done was to smear off the blot with the palm of the other hand, and write over

the blotty part, so there was a good deal of ink spread over everything.

His father took up the inky, smudged paper, and smiled as he saw the notes scrawled all over it, like ants running after each other. But as he looked more carefully he started with surprise, and his smile of amusement died away. This was no mere childish scrawl; it was a real musical composition.

"Herr Schachtner," he said, tears of pride shining in his eyes, "only look how correct and according to rule all this is written, and yet it cannot be made use of, for it is so difficult that no one could attempt to play it."

Wolfgang was listening, and hastened to explain that of course it would need to be well practised before it could be played.

"See," he said, "this is how it should go," and he climbed on to the piano-stool and began to show them what his idea had been when he wrote the music.

The boy was certainly a musical genius, there was no doubt of it, and his sister, too, played almost as wonderfully, so their father made up his mind that he would show them to the world, for he was sure they would win both fame and money.

So first of all the children were taken to Munich and then on to Vienna, and it was like a royal progress, for everywhere the people flocked to hear the wonderful little performers.

The Empress Maria Theresa, who was a great lover of music, ordered that the children should be brought to play before her, and so to court little Wolfgang and his sister went.

The boy did not know what shyness meant. He

was always so sure of being welcomed and loved wherever he went, that he was never afraid of strangers and was never awkward nor ill at ease. He put up his face to be kissed when he was brought to greet the Empress, and then offered to sit on her knee and talk to her. He was only six years old and was small for his age, so he looked a very quaint little figure in his court suit, full-skirted coat and knee-breeches, powdered hair, and buckled shoes. It seemed almost impossible that such a tiny child could be the wonderful musical genius that everyone talked of. But it was a very dignified little boy that sat down to play when he had finished his talk with the Empress. Sitting perched up on the music-stool, he looked calmly round and then beckoned to the Emperor, who was standing close to the piano. Wolfgang could not bear to play to people who did not understand and love music, and he was not quite sure about the Emperor.

"Is not Monsieur Wagenseil here?" he asked anxiously. "We must send for him. He understands the thing."

The composer was sent for immediately, and on his arrival the Emperor gave up his place by the piano. Wolfgang nodded his approval.

"Sir," he said, "I am going to play one of your concertos. You must turn over the pages for me."

The court might smile at the quaint little figure issuing his commands like royalty, but amusement gave place to wonder as soon as the child began to play. It was almost unbelievable that those tiny hands fluttering about the notes could produce such music. Courtiers watched and listened and almost held their breath.

The little princess, Marie Antoinette, drew nearer and nearer to the piano. This little boy, who was just her age, must have come with his music out of fairy-land. Everyone called him a wonder, and she had never seen anyone so like a fairy prince before.

Then the music stopped, and Wolfgang was lifted down that he might go and receive the thanks of the Empress.

Perhaps the music was still surging in his head, or perhaps the polished floors were too slippery for the buckled shoes, but at any rate Wolfgang, after a few steps, lost his balance, slipped and fell. In an instant the little princess ran forward and helped him on to his feet again, and the two children walked the rest of the way together.

"You are good," said Wolfgang, holding her hand tightly and standing on tiptoe to kiss her cheek. "I will marry you."

The Empress smiled when she heard this.

"Why do you wish to marry her?" she asked.

"Out of gratitude," replied Wolfgang, with his courtly little bow; "she was kind to me."

Poor little kind princess, if only it had been a real fairy tale, and the fairy music-maker of six years old could have carried her off to fairyland out of the reach of all human cruelty and treachery!

But although Wolfgang did not carry off the princess as he suggested, there was something else he carried home which meant far more to him than all the princesses in the world, and that was his first violin.

Scarcely had the family arrived home in Salzburg when a famous violin-player came to visit Herr

Mozart to ask his opinion about some music he had been composing. It was arranged to try it over at once, the composer himself playing first violin and Herr Schachtner second. Wolfgang, greatly interested, hugging his little violin under his arm, begged that he might be allowed to play second violin.

"That is a most foolish request," said his father sharply; "thou knowest nothing about the violin, and hast never been taught to play upon it."

"There is no need to learn to play *second* violin," persisted Wolfgang.

"Run away at once," said his father, "and do not trouble us further with your silly requests."

Wolfgang turned to go, hugging his little fiddle tight, the tears running down his cheeks. "Let him play with me," said Herr Schachtner, who could not bear to see the child cry.

"Oh well, then, play along with Herr Schachtner," said his father, "but play so softly that no one can hear thee, or else thou must go away."

Wolfgang, all smiles once more, dried his tears and made ready his violin, and then crept close to his friend. He meant to be as quiet as a mouse, and at first he played very softly as he had been bidden, but presently he forgot everything but the music, and then it was that Herr Schachtner began to play more and more softly, until he stopped altogether, and left Wolfgang playing alone. Not a note was missed, the little violin sang its way in perfect time and tune, and the small fiddler ended by being quite sure he could play first violin if they would let him try.

But although all this came so easily to the child, his father always insisted that he should learn everything

from the beginning, and learn it thoroughly. His other lessons, too, were not neglected, for his father was very strict, and was anxious that Wolfgang should not be spoilt by the admiration he received. The simple home life, the regular lessons, and the habit of prompt obedience were better, he knew, for his little son than being a little court butterfly, petted and admired by royalty and allowed to do just what he pleased.

Wolfgang loved his father with all his heart, and was such a sunny-tempered, happy child that even difficult lessons and hard rules were no hardship to him. His father came "next to our gracious God," as he used to say, and so he never dreamed of disobeying him.

Every night the father and son sang a little duet of nonsense rhymes before Wolfgang went to bed, and then he kissed the tip of his father's nose for good night and made a little speech. "When I am older," he said, "I will put thee under a glass case, to keep thee from the cold and to keep thee always at home."

Every year saw the little Mozart grow more and more wonderful, as he ceased to be a child and grew into boyhood. He learned to play the organ, so that the priest at Heidelberg, having heard him there, wrote the boy's name upon the organ and the date of his visit, as a remembrance of this "wonder of God." He reigned like a little king in Paris, and in England King George IV and Queen Charlotte gave him a most royal welcome. He had his first commission to write an opera when he was ten years old, and it proved quite an easy thing for him to do. It seemed indeed as if there was nothing he could not do in connection with music. Every note he heard he could distinguish separately

by ear. He could compose music without a piano, play everything at sight, and accompany any song by ear alone.

It was a happy, sunny childhood this, and if the clouds came later, they cast no backward shadow over these happy days when the little maker of magic music used his fairy gift to fill the world with the beauty of the melody which was always singing in his heart.

HORATIO NELSON

THE waves over which Britain rules so proudly were beating on her shores, the tides ebbed and flowed under the starlit sky, and there was no special sign to mark the night of September 29, 1758. But the voice of the great waters, ever so full of mystery, might well have burst into a triumphant song. England might well have rejoiced, for it was the night of the birth of her sea-hero, Horatio Nelson.

But nothing triumphant or splendid marked the birth of this particular baby. The village of Burnham-Thorpe was as quiet a spot as could be found in all England, and children were plentiful in the homely old parsonage. Edmund Nelson, the rector, may perhaps have sighed a little when he heard of the birth of another son. It was another mouth to fill, and money was not plentiful in the country parsonage. But Catherine, his wife, had surely a welcome for her little son, and if there was not much to give him, she at least gave him a name of which she was proud. Her grandmother was a sister of Sir Robert Walpole, and the baby should be called Horatio after his godfather Lord Walpole.

Watching her boy as he grew up, noting the quickness of his mind, his fearlessness and determination, the mother may have dreamed many a dream of what he would some day achieve, but they were dreams

which she did not live to see realised, for Horatio was only nine years old when his mother died, leaving eight little motherless children to the care of their father, who was broken down in health and had but few of this world's goods to make the way smoother.

It was at this time that the children's uncle, their mother's brother, Captain Maurice Suckling, came on a short visit to Burnham-Thorpe parsonage. The sight of those eight children, and the thought of their future, made their uncle feel as if he must help in some way. So before he left he promised he would look after one of the boys and have him trained in the Navy. He did nothing just then, and perhaps forgot his promise when he went away, but one at least of the children carefully remembered it.

Horatio was not at all a strong child, but if his body was weak, he had the strongest and most determined mind that ever a child possessed, and was absolutely fearless. When he was a very small boy, he was staying once with his grandmother, and one morning wandered out to hunt for birds' nests with the cowboy. Dinner-time came, but there was no sign of Horatio, and by and by his grandmother became anxious and a search was made for him. The child could not be found anywhere, and they feared that he might have been carried off by gipsies, but at last he was discovered a long way off from home, sitting quietly on the bank of a stream, which was too deep for him to cross over.

"I wonder, child," said his grandmother when he was brought to her, "that hunger and fear did not drive you home."

"Fear! grandmamma," he said wonderingly, "I never saw fear. What is it?"

It was something which he never saw, and never knew all his life.

The school at North Walsham to which Horatio and his brother William were sent was not very far from Burnham-Thorpe, and the boys could easily ride over on horseback from the parsonage. They were returning to school after the Christmas holidays one very severe winter, when they found the snow lying very deep, and determined to turn and go back.

"The snow is too deep to venture on," said William to their father when they returned. William did not much care about going back to school.

"If that be the case," said their father, "you certainly shall not go; but make another attempt and I will leave it to your honour. If the road is dangerous, you may return: but remember, boys, I leave it to your honour."

So off the two boys started again, and this time they found the snow was really quite deep enough to have given them a good excuse to go back. But Horatio would not give in.

"We must go on," he said; "remember, brother, it was left to our honour."

There was nothing then left for William to do but to go on too, for he knew it was no use trying to persuade the other when it was a question of honour. Not that Horatio was in the least a prig, and the boys all knew that full well. He was ready for any adventure, the more dangerous the better, and it was he who stole the pears from the master's garden when no one else dared to risk it.

"I'll get them to-night," he volunteered, and so when darkness hid the conspirators they knotted sheets

together and lowered the bold adventurer down from the bedroom window. The boys waited breathlessly while Horatio stripped the pear tree, and then, when the return signal was given, they hauled him up again and the spoil was divided. Every one had a share except the robber himself, who did not want any.

"I only took them because every other boy was afraid," he said.

The next Christmas holidays were rather lonely ones for the children at Burnham-Thorpe parsonage, for their father had been ill and was obliged to go to Bath for his health. Horatio, who was now twelve years old, was reading the county newspaper one morning when he saw that his Uncle Maurice had been appointed to the *Raisonnable*, a ship of sixty-four guns. This was surely the time, thought Horatio, to remind him of that promise he had made three years ago.

"Do, William," he said to his brother, "write to my father and tell him I should like to go to sea with Uncle Maurice."

William, who was a year or so older than Horatio, undertook to write the letter, and their father, when he received it, thought the idea a good one. He knew that Horatio was anxious to work for himself, and he believed the boy would get on.

"In whatever station he may be placed, he will climb if possible to the very top of the tree," he said.

So he wrote at once to Captain Suckling and proposed that he should take Horatio on board and make a sailor of him.

The answer came, written in no very cheerful terms. The delicate boy had evidently not impressed his uncle

as being of the stuff of which our hearts of oak are made. "What," he wrote, "has poor Horatio done, who is so weak, that he, above all the rest, should be sent to rough it out at sea? But let him come, and the first time we go into action a cannon-ball may knock off his head, and provide for him at once."

However it was a consent, if a somewhat gloomy one, and the man-servant from the parsonage was sent to North Walsham to tell the news to Horatio and bid him get ready to join his ship.

There must have been a certain amount of rejoicing at the thought of leaving school, and no doubt his schoolfellows envied him greatly, but the glamour of romance very soon faded for Horatio.

His father took him as far as London and then put him into the Chatham coach, and after that the boy had to manage for himself. It was very cold when he arrived at Chatham, and he wandered about trying to find the ship, and felt more lost and bewildered each moment. Then a kindly officer took pity on the forlorn-looking child, and finding he was Captain Suckling's nephew, took him home to dinner before sending him aboard.

But even when at last young Nelson stood on the deck of the good ship *Raisonnable* his spirits did not rise. His uncle was not there and no one knew he was expected, and he had never felt so lonely and wretched in his life before.

In all his after years Nelson never forgot the forlorn wretchedness of those first few days on board his first ship, and it made him very gentle with the little midshipmen who were happy enough to sail under his orders.

There had been some dispute with Spain about the Falkland Isles, and the *Raisonnable* had been ordered out to be ready in case of need, but when the matter was settled she returned home, and Captain Suckling was given the command of a gunboat, the *Triumph*, which guarded the Thames.

This was not an active enough life for young Nelson, so he was shipped off in a merchant vessel to the West Indies, and after this second voyage he was with his uncle again for a few months and learned to pilot a boat among the rocks and sands from Chatham to the Tower, and down to the North Foreland.

But there was much more exciting work to be done than this, for Horatio heard that two ships were being prepared to start off on a voyage of discovery to the North Pole. No boys were to be shipped, as only strong men would be needed for the adventure, but nevertheless young Nelson made up his mind he was going, and applied for a berth. Perhaps it was his uncle's interest that helped him, but whatever it was, he received permission to join the *Carcass* as coxwain.

The two ships, the *Carcass* and the *Racehorse*, set sail for the north, and before very long there were adventures enough even to suit Horatio's taste, and rather more than the rest of the crew relished. At one time when the ship was shut in by ice, young Nelson was put in command of one of the boats which was sent out to search for a free passage into open water. Another boat had been sent from the *Racehorse*, and this one soon found itself in great difficulties.

One of the men had fired at a walrus and wounded it, and the wounded animal immediately called its companions together and attacked the boat. They

tore away an oar and were just about to stave the boat in when young Nelson came on the scene and put the enemy to rout.

The more daring and dangerous the adventure, the more the boy loved it, and one night without leave he left the ship with a companion and started a bear hunt. The captain was very anxious and very angry when he discovered their absence, and when at last they were seen in the distance attacking a huge bear, he signalled to them to return immediately.

But Nelson paid no attention to the signal, he was so determined to get that bear. His ammunition was all gone, but he was sure he could manage it with the butt-end of his musket, if only he could get near enough. Luckily there was a chasm in the ice between him and the bear, or the hunter would certainly have had the worst of it.

Just then a shot was fired from the ship and the bear made off, while Nelson had reluctantly to go back.

The captain was very angry, and demanded what he meant by going and hunting for bears in that way.

"Sir," said Horatio rather indignantly, "I wished to kill the bear that I might carry the skin to my father."

The next voyage was to the East Indies, and here the boy's health broke down and he lost heart altogether. He had done his very best, learned all that he could possibly learn, suffered great hardships, and had not even yet won the rank of a midshipman. All seemed black and gloomy enough in the present, all looked black and gloomy enough ahead.

The difficulties still to be overcome seemed too great to struggle with, he doubted if he would ever rise to

the top of his profession, and he almost wished himself overboard.

Then, just as everything looked black as night, a light shone in, a splendid thought flashed through his mind, and sent a glow through his heart. He had a king and a country to serve. For England's sake he would succeed, he would brave every danger in her service, and she, the mistress of the sea, would one day be proud of her son. All that he asked was to serve her well and faithfully to the end.

Again might the voice of the great deep have sung a triumphant song as the boy saw his vision, and set his face steadfastly towards the goal. The honour and glory of England lay at the end of that shining road which he saw stretching before him, and he never again lost sight of the vision.

Surely the heart of every one of Britain's sons must glow when he thinks of what that boy achieved, surely there are boys to-day who are ready to hand the message on:

"What have I done for you,
England, my England?
What is there I would not do,
England, my own?"

ARTHUR, DUKE OF WELLINGTON

In long ago days, when the stars were thought to hold the secret of the fortune of every child born into the world, wise men gazed up into the wonderful dome of heaven, set with its millions of diamond lamps, and tried to read in that shining page of night the secret which only the coming years could unfold.

Surely if the stars, which look down so calmly and so coldly upon the little lives just beginning in this world of ours, were really fortune-tellers, they would have set a special sign in the heavens to mark the year of Grace 1769, the year which saw the birth of Arthur, Duke of Wellington, and Napoleon Bonaparte.

But the stars shone on as usual and the world went its way, and there was nothing to mark the birth of our great general, there was nothing to give even a hint of what the years held in store for him. Indeed it seemed of so little importance that we do not know the exact day of his birth, nor the exact place where he was born.

People say that every mother sees a halo round her child which enables her to foresee the honours that will crown the little downy head lying so helpless in its cradle, but dreams like these were never dreamed over the head of this particular baby. His mother never thought much about him at all. Only as he grew older

she was vexed with his slow way of speaking and his dull manner. He really did seem a very stupid boy.

"I vow," she would say, "I don't know what I shall do with my awkward son Arthur."

When his lady mother said that, all the household of course followed suit, and Arthur was considered an awkward dunce, and no one troubled themselves much about him. And if the stars took no notice of his birthday, neither did the sun shine very brightly on his childhood, for he was a lonely, rather unhappy little boy.

School was considered the best place for a tiresome child, and as soon as he was old enough Arthur was sent away to a little school where he was not much happier than he had been at home. He does not seem to have had any hampers of good things, or much pocket-money either. One of his schoolfellows remembered long years afterwards how "Lord Wellesley called on Arthur one day and gave him a shilling." Not a very big tip from an elder brother!

After the preparatory school Arthur was sent to Eton, and there he was still considered a dull, stupid boy. His head was so often in the clouds, and he looked as if he was always dreaming, besides being very shy. He was not a favourite amongst the boys for he did not care much about games and never played in the school cricket-matches or rowed in the boat-races. Almost always by himself he wandered about apparently doing nothing, but all the time he was looking and learning, and storing up a golden store in his mind. There was nothing too small for him to notice. What seemed like unimportant details to others, were the things he tried first of all to learn before going on to bigger things.

There was no thought in the boy's mind at that time that he would become a soldier. He had no wish to go into the army, although he was certainly by no means afraid of fighting and could hold his own fairly well with other boys.

Walking one day by the side of the river, he saw one of his schoolfellows bathing and was prompted to throw a small stone at him. The stone hit the swimmer, who was naturally most indignant, and who shouted out:

"Do that again and I'll come ashore and thrash you."

Of course, after a threat like that, there was nothing left for Arthur Wellesley to do but to throw another stone, and the furious bather scrambled up the bank and proceeded to carry out his threat. Wellesley gave back blow for blow, and ended by completely routing the enemy, although he certainly was in the wrong that time, and did not deserve the victory he won.

But there were other times when he did not come off with such flying colours. On his grandfather's estate in North Wales there lived a young blacksmith with whom Arthur was very friendly, until one day when some difference of opinion arose between them, and they settled to fight it out. The battle was a fierce one, but in the end the blacksmith was victorious, and gave Arthur a sound thrashing. Long years afterwards, that blacksmith used to proudly boast that he had beaten the man who had conquered Napoleon and all his generals, and he always added, "And Master Wesley bore not a pin's worth of ill-will for the beating, but made me his companion in many a wild ramble after the fight, just as he had done before."

The school-days at Eton were cut short for Arthur,

when his father, Lord Mornington, died and his mother went to live in Brussels and took him with her. There he studied under a tutor, Monsieur Louis Goubert, whom Arthur always kindly remembered, for in after years he tells how "as I rode into Brussels the day after the battle of Waterloo, I passed the old house and recognised it, and pulling up ascertained that the old man was still alive. I sent for him and recalled myself to his recollection, shook hands with him and assured him that for old acquaintance' sake he should be protected from all molestation."

After a year at Brussels Arthur was sent to a school at Angers, where he learned French, and according to a friend's account, "he played well on the fiddle, but never gave indication of any other species of talent."

By this time his mother was quite hopeless about her awkward son Arthur, and she decided that he should enter the army. "He is good for powder and nothing more," she declared.

So his elder brother wrote to the Viceroy of Ireland saying, "Let me remind you of a younger brother of mine whom you were so kind as to take into your consideration for a commission in the army. He is here at this moment and perfectly idle. It is a matter of indifference to me what commission he gets, provided he gets it soon."

The stars must surely then have looked down with quickened interest, watching for the fate of nations to be decided, watching for the coming of the hero, whose very name is now the glory of England, the quiet dull boy who had "shown no signs of greatness," but who stood out to win fame and honour for his nation and himself.

NAPOLEON BONAPARTE

THE island of Corsica had been coming through troubled times, and there was still a feeling of war in the air on the 15th of August 1769, when the little Napoleon was born at Ajaccio.

The stars looked down on many a ruined home, on many a battle-field only now beginning to show itself green instead of red, and they looked down too upon the little child, in whose tiny helpless hands were the threads of fate that were to lead to many a wider battle-field, dyed with even a deeper red.

Charles Bonaparte, the father of the little Napoleon, had fought well for the liberty of his country, and it was only when he saw that the struggle was a hopeless one that he laid down his arms and accepted the French as rulers of Corsica. He was a handsome, courtly man and belonged to the old nobility, and his wife Letizia was of noble family also. She was indeed well fitted to be the wife of a soldier and the mother of one of the greatest leaders of men the world has ever known.

No hardships kept Letizia from following her husband through all the wars of that unhappy time, and when the last battle was fought and lost, she escaped with him, and carrying the eldest boy Joseph in her arms, struggled through brushwood and open country, waded through rivers and climbed hills, until they reached a safe place of refuge, always cheerful and

uncomplaining. It was but a short time after those weary days that her second son, Napoleon, was born. Madame Mire, as she was called, loved her children with all her heart, and Napoleon's love for his mother was one of the beautiful things in his life, but she was extremely severe and brought her sons up most strictly. Many a sound whipping did she give them, and Napoleon especially received even more than his share at her hands. Joseph was a quiet kindly child, and both he and little Lucien were easily managed, but Napoleon was always a disturber of the peace, always wanting his own way and ready to fight for it, caring not a jot whether the person he fought with was thrice his size and double his age.

With such a child as this, Madame Mire had naturally no idea of sparing the rod. Even when Napoleon was almost grown up she whipped him soundly one day. He had called his grandmother "an old witch," which had made his mother very angry, and knowing he would be punished for it, he kept out of her way all day. But there was no escape, for in the evening when he was dressing for dinner, she quietly came into his room, and the thrashing she gave him was none the lighter for being so long delayed.

In the large bare room, with its whitewashed walls, which was set apart for the children's playroom, Napoleon played his own purposeful games by himself, and seldom would join his brothers. He was the true son of a soldier, and loved to march up and down beating his drum or charging with his wooden sabre. The walls were covered with his drawings of soldiers, ranged in battle array, and woe betide anyone who scribbled over them.

This warlike spirit might ill have suited the gentle nuns who were Napoleon's first teachers, but the child was as much interested in his games and was a great favourite with his teachers. "The little mathematician" was what they called him, as they soon discovered he had a genius for numbers.

Napoleon had little idea what a mathematician meant. The nuns might call him that if they liked, but he himself knew very well that he was going to be a soldier and nothing else. Already he began to prepare himself, and every morning when he started for school he changed his piece of white bread, which was given him for lunch, for a piece of coarse brown bread, which was what the soldiers ate.

"I must grow accustomed to soldiers' fare," he said very wisely.

As he grew older the big playroom became too noisy a place for work, and so a little shed was built for him behind the house where he could learn his lessons and work out his sums in peace. All else was forgotten as he made his calculations and thought his big thoughts, and he would walk about with his head in the clouds and his stockings hanging over his heels, while the other children mocked at him for his foolishness and untidiness. But their jeers made not the slightest impression upon him, only if he was once roused to anger they quickly repented of their mirth.

Fear was something which was quite unknown to Napoleon, and when he was only eight years old he mounted a young spirited horse and rode off before anyone could prevent him, to the dismay of the whole family, who never expected to see him alive again. But he thoroughly enjoyed his ride, and when he pulled up

at a distant farm he quickly made friends with the farmer, and before he left begged to be allowed to go over the mill. He examined each part of the machinery and then asked :

"How much corn can the mill grind in an hour?"

The miller told him, and Napoleon considered for a moment and then calculated exactly how much it would grind in a day and in a week.

"If that child lives," said the farmer when he took him back to his mother, "he will make a mark in the world."

For a short time Joseph and Napoleon went together to a school kept by the Abbé Recco, and there lessons were arranged on a plan that entirely suited Napoleon's tastes. The boys sat on forms, facing each other, in two companies, the one called Romans and the other Carthaginians. On the wall above were hung warlike trophies, wooden swords and shields, banners and battle-axes, and these were carried off as spoils of war by the form that excelled in their lessons.

Joseph being the elder was put in the Roman form, and Napoleon was obliged to be a Carthaginian, which did not please him at all. He wished to be a Roman and as usual he got his own way, persuading his good-natured brother to change with him. After that the Carthaginians had a very hard struggle to keep their shields and weapons, for the young Roman swept everything before him and was satisfied with nothing short of complete victory.

When Napoleon was nine and Joseph ten, their father decided that the one should be a priest and the other a soldier, and having a good deal of interest with Marbœuf, the French Governor of Corsica, it

was no difficult matter to arrange that Napoleon should enter one of the Royal Military Schools of France, and that Joseph should be trained at the College of Autun.

So Charles Bonaparte and his two boys left Ajaccio in the winter of 1778, just before Christmas, and journeyed to France, where the boys were both left at Autun under the care of the Abbé de Chardon, as it was necessary that Napoleon should learn French before he entered the Military School.

Those were unhappy days for Napoleon, though worse were yet to come, when he should be parted from Joseph and be utterly alone, a stranger in a strange land. He missed his home, his own room, his garden, and above all the sunshine of his beloved Corsica. French was a foreign tongue to him so he talked but little, and he was only driven to speech when anyone mentioned Corsica, and then he fired up and declared that the French would never have conquered his island had they not been ten to one.

No one cared very much for the gloomy, silent boy, with his foreign tongue, his olive complexion and piercing eyes, and the big forehead that could look so lowering. The boys were half afraid of him, he had such a passionate temper and did not seem to care to make friends. He had no difficulty with his lessons, for he was extremely quick and never needed to be told anything twice over. When his master taught some new fact, Napoleon listened with eyes and mouth open, but when the same fact was repeated he paid no attention whatever.

"You are not attending," his master said sharply one day.

"Sir," replied Napoleon, "I know that already."

When the time came for him to say good-bye to his brother and start for the Military School, Joseph burst into tears at the parting, but Napoleon never lost his self-control. Only one big tear squeezed its way out, and ran slowly down his cheek, and that he brushed hastily away. One of the masters who was standing near, watching the brothers, turned and laid his hand on Joseph's arm.

"Your brother has shed only one tear," he said, "but that shows his sorrow at leaving you as much as all yours."

The Royal Military School at Brienne to which Napoleon was sent had been originally a monastery, and was now kept by monks of the order of the Minims. About fifty boys of the poor nobility were educated there at the King's expense, and about the same number were received as ordinary pupils. Napoleon's poverty being as easy to prove as his nobility, he was entered as one of the King's scholars.

The boys had each a separate room, or cell, in which was a water-jug and basin, and a bed with one blanket for covering. In these cells they were locked up at nights, and their days were spent in the class-rooms or gardens. They never went home for their holidays, and never left school from the day they entered until their school-days came to an end. Until they were twelve years old their hair was kept short, but after that it was allowed to grow into a pigtail, although powder was only allowed on Sundays and saints' days.

Napoleon, though he was short, had broad shoulders and carried himself well, and he must have looked very soldierly in the school uniform—a blue coat with

red facings and white metal buttons engraved with the arms of the college, blue waistcoat faced with white, and breeches also of blue.

For a long time he was no more a favourite here than he had been at Autun, and he lived a lonely life, going about with a sullen, gloomy look and forbidding air. Like all the other boys he had a garden of his own, but Napoleon's garden was never gay with flowers or open to the playing of games. The first thing he did was to fence it round with a palisade, and then to plant trees in it, so that he could hide himself and be alone, dreaming his dreams and reading his books. If anyone ever ventured inside that palisade, he seldom cared to do so twice.

Lonely and homesick, Napoleon's great comfort was in his books, and he loved to read the stories of great men, and plan how he also would some day climb the ladder of fame. He read and re-read Plutarch's Lives, and that was his favourite book of all. The boys laughed at his foreign name and curious ways, and called him "the Spartan," but it was little Napoleon cared for their jeers. Some day he would make them respect the name he bore. He had no great affection for his masters, any more than for the boys, but he had a wonderful memory for any kindness shown to him and a very grateful heart, and this was shown in after years when his hands were full of golden favours and he gave freely to all those people of Brienne. To the priest who had prepared him for his first communion he gave a pension and wrote a very grateful letter.

"I have not forgotten that it is to your virtuous example, and to your wise precepts that I owe the high position that I have reached," he wrote. "Without

religion, no happiness, no success is possible. I recommend myself to your prayers."

But whether he went on his way alone, or was occasionally helped and encouraged by his masters, it made but little difference to Napoleon during those school-days, for his whole heart was full of the one idea of being a soldier, and learning all that a soldier should know. Mathematics, history, and geography he loved, but Latin he never would learn. It could never be of any use to a soldier, he said.

The unfriendly feeling between Napoleon and his companions grew stronger and stronger until at last a climax was reached. The school had been divided into companies of cadets, with a commander at the head of each company, and the command of one of these companies was given to Napoleon. The other commanders, on learning this, were determined it should not be allowed, so they held a court-martial and agreed that Napoleon should be degraded from his rank as he was not fit to command comrades with whom he refused to be friends.

The sentence was read with all due military solemnity to Napoleon, and the boys expected a terrific attack of temper, but instead the little degraded officer bore himself with such humble dignity and submitted so patiently that the boys liked him better than they had ever done before, and gradually he became a great favourite.

That winter was a very severe one, and the boys' respect and admiration for Napoleon grew stronger when he built for them a splendid snow fortress which was a perfect marvel of skill and strength. He organised the defence and attack, drilled his soldiers and

encouraged the enemy. The solitary sullen boy was like a different being, and became the hero of the hour. His will was law, and he could do as he liked with his schoolboy army. So famous was that snow fortress that the people from the village and the country round about came to see it and to watch the fight and advise the young commander.

Into Napoleon's heart had come the joy of knowing that he could make others feel his will, and sway them as he would.

It was the first faint gleam from the dawning star of his fortunes which was to rise higher and higher until it shone with a brilliance such as the world has seldom seen.

It was his first victory, a happy innocent triumph, and it was his first battle-field, but the field was white.

SIR WALTER SCOTT

In the heart of the old grey capital of the North lies a pleasant square, with tall, rather gloomy houses surrounding it on every side, shutting out the poorer streets in one direction and the quiet green meadows on the other. This was considered a much healthier place for children than the College Wynd where Mr. Walter Scott, Writer to the Signet, had lived with his wife and family for some years. One by one their children had faded and died, leaving but six little mounds in the churchyard and six locks of sunny hair for their mother to cherish. So it was a happy day for her when there was a flitting from the old house in College Wynd to the pleasant open spaces of George Square, where it was hoped that the last baby, Walter, and his two elder brothers would grow up strong healthy children.

There certainly seemed no cause for anxiety about the baby, for he was as well and happy as a child should be, and by the time he was eighteen months old he could run about by himself, and run swiftly too, when he did not wish to be caught. There was one night when his nurse must have lost all patience with her "laddie." He did not want to go to bed, and whenever she tried to catch him he danced out of her reach, wild with delight and merriment. The child was surely bewitched or "fey," as the Scotch tongue called

it, and she shook her head over this wild mood of his, as she at last caught him and put him to bed.

The next day there was no more running about, for the baby lay moaning and ill with a teething fever, and when that left him they found, when they were bathing him, that one of his little legs hung limp and useless, with no life or power of movement in it.

Doctors were called in and everything possible was done, but still the leg remained weak and useless, and it seemed as if the child would be a cripple. Then Dr. Rutherford, his grandfather, advised that he should be sent away to the country, where he could be a great deal in the open air, and where perhaps the weak leg might grow strong again.

So it came to pass that little Walter was sent to live with his other grandfather, Robert Scott of Sandyknowe, and the child's first memories were of the Borderlands of Scotland, the Tweed and the Teviot, and the old castle of Smailholm.

Every possible cure was tried for that poor little lame leg, and some of the remedies were very curious ones. Whenever a sheep was killed on the farm, Walter, stripped of his clothes, was wrapped in the warm newly-flayed skin and laid on the floor to crawl about like a veritable Baby Bunting. The old white-haired grandfather watched him anxiously and tried to tempt the funny little figure, wrapped in its sheep's clothing, to move about and use the weak leg, and Walter also remembered an old colonel in a cocked hat and scarlet waistcoat, kneeling down and drawing a watch across the carpet before the creeping child.

But perhaps the best cure of all was the strong, fresh country air, and the days spent out of doors,

when auld Sandy the "cow-bailie" carried Walter about on his back, or set him down to crawl on the thymey grass among the sheep and lambs.

"He was very gleg at the uptake, and soon kenned every sheep and lamb by headmark as well as any of them," said an old servant, Tibby, long afterwards, with great pride.

Lying out there among the grassy knolls, he was content to watch the sheep and the distant hills, to crawl after wild flowers and the "velvet tufts of loveliest green," and he never needed other amusements.

There was one day when a thunderstorm came up suddenly and Miss Janet Scott, his aunt, remembered where he was, and set off in haste to bring him home, for she was afraid he might be lonely and frightened. She need not have been anxious, for Walter was enjoying himself greatly. There he lay on his back watching the sky, clapping his hands at every flash of lightning and shouting, "Bonny! Bonny!"

Everything about the countryside was "bonny" in the child's eyes, and as he grew older he thought it more beautiful still, when he heard the wonderful tales of the Borderland, "where every field has its battle and every rivulet its song." Auld Sandy would look across to the distant Cheviots and tell of raiders and famous battles, or pointing nearer still to where the Eildons stood, "three crests against the saffron sky," he whispered tales of the Faerie Queen and Thomas the Rhymer, while stories even more wonderful and interesting gathered round the old ruin of Smailholm Tower which stood sentinel on the crags above. Many a tale did Walter hear, too, of his own ancestors, of John the Lamiter; of William the Boltfoot, who, in

spite of his lameness, grew up to be one of the boldest knights of all the country-side; of auld Watt of Harden, who swept over the Border with his gallant raiders, and returned with goodly herds of English cattle; of "Beardie," his great-grandfather, who fought for the Stuarts, and refused to cut off his beard since they were banished.

Every kind of tale was a delight to the child, and he was never tired of listening to anyone that would tell him a story, whether he was riding on auld Sandy's back out on the hills or lying on the floor at his grandmother's feet as she sat spinning by the fire. His grandmother's tales, indeed, were as exciting as any history of Robin Hood, and much more interesting, for some of the heroes of whom she told were old family connections, raiders and freebooters though they were, and the stories about their bold deeds were endless. Then, too, there were a few books lying on the window-seat of the little parlour, which Aunt Janet read aloud over and over again until Walter almost knew them by heart.

The Ballad of Hardyknute was the first he learned to repeat, and repeat it he did on every possible occasion, greatly to the annoyance of the parish minister when he called for a quiet chat.

"One may as well speak in the mouth of a cannon as where that child is," he remarked grimly, sitting up, tall and thin, and regarding the shouting child with great disfavour. But they grew to be good friends afterwards, the grave old minister and the little lame ballad-lover.

Walter was four years old when it was decided that he should try what the waters of Bath would do for

his lameness, and so with his good Aunt Janet he went up to London by sea, and after seeing some of the sights there, journeyed on to Bath. He must have had a wonderful memory for so small a child, for although he did not again see the Tower of London and Westminster Abbey for twenty-five years, he was astonished as a grown-up man to find how accurate were his recollections of them both.

The next year was spent in Bath, and although it must have been a great change from Sandyknowe, there were other joys to make up for the loss of the green meadows and his friend the shepherd. Chiefest joy of all was the arrival of an uncle, Captain Robert Scott, who was a delightful playfellow and a wonderful person for providing treats and amusements. He even took Walter to the theatre to see *As You Like It*, and that was something Walter never forgot. He was so much excited and interested that he could not keep still, and when the quarrel between Orlando and his brother began, the audience must have been amused to hear a little voice cry out in shocked accents, "A'n't they brothers?"

Having lived the life of an only child at Sandyknowe, he did not realise that it was possible for brothers to quarrel, but the knowledge came afterwards when he lived amongst his own brothers in George Square.

The waters of Bath were given a fair trial with but poor results, and then Aunt Janet brought little Walter home again, first to Edinburgh and then back to Sandyknowe.

"The making of him" had begun long ago, when he first began to crawl about the grassy slopes of the old farm, when his eyes first learned to love the beautiful

things he saw, and his ears to listen eagerly to the old tales and ballads, and now before he was six years old there was much that was already made of the man to come.

He could ride fearlessly on his little Shetland pony, and he rode well. He loved all out-of-door things, birds, beasts, flowers, hills, dales, and rivers. All things connected with the past were interesting in his eyes, and he was a firm believer in the divine right of Prince Charlie. Above all he loved with all his heart old tales, old songs and ballads of every sort.

"He is born to be a strolling pedlar," was his father's verdict.

"I was never a dunce, nor thought to be so, but an incorrigibly idle imp, who was always longing to do something else than what was enjoined him," was his own opinion of himself.

There is yet another opinion of him contained in a letter written about this time by the authoress of "The Flowers of the Forest."

She writes, "I last night supped in Mr. Walter Scott's. He has the most extraordinary genius of a boy I ever saw. He was reading a poem to his mother when I went in. I made him read on; it was the description of a shipwreck. His passion rose with the storm. He lifted his eyes and hands. 'There's the mast gone,' says he; 'crash it goes!—they will all perish!'" The lady goes on to tell how she asked his opinion of Milton and other books he was reading, and was amazed with his answers.

"Pray what age do you suppose this boy to be?" she asks; "name it now before I tell you."

"Why, twelve or fourteen."

"No such thing; he is not quite six years old. He has a lame leg, for which he was a year at Bath, and has acquired the perfect English accent, which he has not lost since he came, and he reads like a Garrick. You will allow this an uncommon exotic."

Two more years were spent at Sandyknowe, and then he was taken for a while again by Aunt Janet to Prestonpans, to try what sea-bathing would do for him. There he made another friend and heard more of his beloved old tales from an old military captain called Dalgetty, who had never before found such an eager listener as the little lame boy.

But now that Walter was eight years old and was growing so much stronger, his father began to think it was high time that his regular education should begin, and so the pleasant life at Sandyknowe came to an end and Walter went home to George Square, and after a little private teaching was entered at the High School.

Perhaps he had been rather spoilt at Sandyknowe where he was an only child and a favourite with everybody, where his gentle old grandmother ruled with a kindly hand, and where he was the joy of Aunt Janet's heart, strict though she might be. At any rate it was a trying change to find himself of much less importance in a big household, where he had to learn to give and take with other children, and where he could not expect to have his own way or to domineer over the others.

But his mother understood all about it, as mothers do, and helped him to be patient and unselfish. Perhaps the little lame son whom she had been obliged to part from for so many years had a special place

nearer her heart than the others, or perhaps she understood him better, for she loved many of the things he did, and Walter soon found that she was always ready to listen to his favourite stories and ballads, and his happiest times were when he was reading to her or reciting long passages which he had learned, sure of her sympathy.

It was no wonder that life was not only more difficult but more stirring and noisy than in the old farm, for in the George Square home there were two brothers older than Walter, two that were younger, and one little sister, Anne. One or other of them was always getting into mischief or hurting himself, but perhaps the most unfortunate of all was little Anne.

When the wind banged the iron gate of the area shut, it was Anne's hand that was caught in the hasp and cruelly crushed. When the children were playing round the old quarry-hole on the south side of the Square, it was Anne who fell in and was nearly drowned. But the worst accident of all was the burning of her little cap when she was alone in the room one day, for her head was terribly hurt, and she was never quite strong and well again.

"Careful comforts" those children must have been to the anxious mother, and she rather dreaded the time when her lame boy must go to school and be knocked about by the rough strong boys. But she need not have been anxious about that. Walter was quite able to hold his own, and he was absolutely fearless. He might be lame, but he was a "bonny fechter," as the other boys very soon found out.

The first day that Walter appeared in the High

School playground, or "the yards" as it was called, a dispute arose between him and another boy.

"It's no use to hargle-bargle with a cripple," said the boy contemptuously.

"I'll fight anyone my own size, if I may fight mounted," said Walter. Whereupon one of the elder boys in great delight arranged that the "two little tinklers" should be lashed to a bench and fight the quarrel out; and Walter gave a good account of himself, and carried the respect and admiration of his schoolfellows.

He was more of a success in the yards than in the schoolroom at first, for the class in which he was placed was rather too advanced for him, and he got into the habit of sitting comfortably at the bottom or middle of the class. It was a place which chanced to be near the fire, and that made him the more contented with it.

But although he was rather idle and careless about learning his lessons, he was very quick with his answers, and had a wonderful memory which sometimes stood him in such good stead that he easily mounted to the top of the class, and then just as easily went down again.

"What part of speech is *with*," asked the Rector one day.

"A substantive," mumbled the dunce of the class.

"Is *with* ever a substantive?" demanded the Rector of the head boy.

There was no answer; the next boy was also silent, and the question passed down the class until it reached Walter very near the bottom.

"Yes," came the quick answer from him, and he

quoted solemnly, "'And Samson said unto Delilah, If they bind me with seven green *withs*, that were never dried, then shall I be weak, and as another man.'"

And of course up he went to the top of the class.

Many and ingenious were his ways of winning a higher place, and the story of one successful plan he told himself many years after.

"There was a boy," he said, "in my class at school who stood always at the top, nor could I, with all my efforts, supplant him. Day came after day and still he kept his place, do what I would; till at length I observed that, when a question was asked him, he always fumbled with his fingers at a particular button in the lower part of his waistcoat. To remove it, therefore, became expedient in my eyes, and in an evil moment it was removed with a knife. Great was my anxiety to know the success of my measure; and it succeeded too well. When the boy was again questioned, his fingers sought again for the button, but it was not to be found. In his distress he looked down for it; it was to be seen no more than to be felt. He stood confounded, and I took possession of his place, nor did he ever recover it; or even I believe suspect who was the author of his wrong. Often in after life has the sight of him smote me as I passed by him; and often have I resolved to make him some reparation: but it ended in good resolutions."

The masters might shake their heads over your Walter Scott's idleness and "fooling," but they always found him most interesting, while among the boys he was a decided favourite. It was not only that they admired his pluck and courage and the way he faced up to the great drawback of his lameness, though that

alone would have appealed to any boy, for he was such a thorough sportsman, but he had besides a magic gift, as full of enchantment as any wizard's wand, and as compelling as any fairy flute possessed by the Pied Piper of Hamelin fame.

When winter came round and play hours were dark and dreary, and outside games at a standstill, when the boys gathered round "Lucky Brown's" fireside, then began Walter Scott's hour. There was no one that could tell tales as he could. The boys were spellbound as they listened, and they crowded round nearer and nearer not to lose a word, for the magic worked then even as it did in later years, when it earned for him the title of "the Wizard of the North."

Dr. Adam, the Rector, caught a glimpse now and then of what was in the boy, and began to take a greater interest in him, and when Walter saw that more was expected of him, he made it a point of honour to come up to his master's expectations, and so erelong he easily worked his way up to the first form. Neither did his lame leg prevent him winning honours in the playground, and outside the playground as well, for he could climb "the kittle nine stanes" above the precipice of the Castle rock as boldly as anyone, and when the boys sallied out with snowballs to harass the town guard, he was one of the most valiant dread-noughts in spite of his limp. He was a keen fighter, too, in the street fights or "bickers" as they were called, battles between the boys living in different parts of the city, which were carried on with great good-will and energy.

But Walter's fighting days came to an end just then, and his High School days too. He had been growing too quickly, and again his health broke down.

Aunt Janet lived at Kelso now, and she was only too glad to have her boy with her once more, so there Walter spent a quiet holiday time, and in the pleasant garden running down to the Tweed read his beloved books in peace and quietness, in the midst of his beloved "land of romance."

For a short time each day he went to the village grammar school, and there again the boys came under the magic of his spell.

"He was certainly the best story-teller I had ever heard, either then or since," says one of the boys, James Ballantyne, who was afterwards to be the printer of all Sir Walter Scott's works. "He soon discovered that I was as fond of listening as he himself was of relating; and I remember it was a thing of daily occurrence, that after he had made himself master of his own lessons, I, alas, being still sadly to seek in mine, he used to whisper to me, 'Come, slink over beside me, Jamie, and I'll tell you a story.'"

Three generations have grown up since the voice that told those tales was silent, but the magic of his gift still holds men spellbound, and the golden key he placed in their hands has opened the gate of a world of Romance in which he himself used to dwell. The little lame story-teller is gone but his magic lives on, and any child who cares to listen may still hear the invitation, "Come, slink over beside me, Jamie, and I'll tell you a story."

ELIZABETH FRY

It is not always the bravest children who grow up to fight most manfully in the battle of life. When we read of deeds of courage and daring and brave endurance, we are apt to think that the hero or heroine must always have been as fearless and courageous in childhood as in after life, and we forget that out of weakness may come forth strength, and from fearful timidity may spring the highest courage.

We do not know very much about the childhood of Elizabeth Fry, the gentle Quaker lady, who worked with such courage and devotion in our English prisons, and fought single-handed the battle of the weak against the strong, but what we know shows us that the most timid and easily frightened child may learn to become fearless and to fight the Good Fight with marvellous courage and fortitude.

Elizabeth Gurney was born in Norwich on the 21st of May 1780. The Gurneys were a very old family, dating back from the time of William Rufus, when their ancestors came over from the town of Gourney in Normandy and settled in England. For generations the family had been Quakers, but Elizabeth's parents were not inclined to bring their children up too strictly, and they mixed more with the world than many Quakers thought fit to do.

Elizabeth, or Betsy as she was called, was the third

daughter in a very large family, and her early years were spent either at Norwich or at Bramerton, a little country place on the edge of a common, some miles from Norwich.

The pleasantest memories of Elizabeth's life were all connected with Bramerton, although she was only a tiny child when she lived there. The wild scenery round the common, the comfortable farmhouses, the picturesque village with its school, and the clustering cottages all were interesting to the little "dove-like" maid in her sober dress and Quaker bonnet, as she walked out with her beloved mother. But most interesting of all were the poor people who lived in the cottages, and the little children who bobbed their curtseys and pulled their forelocks when they came trooping out of school. There was an old woman with one arm, "one-armed Betty" as she was called, who was a person of special interest, and a neighbour with the fascinating name of Greengrass, who proved to be worthy of her name by having the most delicious strawberry-beds round the little pond in her garden.

Betsy always loved to be out of doors, and when she was not visiting the cottages with her mother, there was the dear old-fashioned garden in which she could wander about to her heart's content. It was there that she first heard the story of Adam and Eve, and how they were driven out of Paradise. She was quite sure that the Garden of Eden must have been exactly like her own dear beautiful garden, and she was so thankful to think that there was no danger of meeting the angel with the flaming sword round any corner now. In spite of the many pleasant things around her, the

world seemed still very full of dangers ready to pounce out and frighten little girls.

For instance, just as she was preparing to go for a delightful drive with her father and mother, what should she spy in a corner of the carriage but a gun? Now there was no telling when a gun might go off suddenly, and the very look of it was a terror to Betsy. The only way out of the difficulty was to say she did not want to go, and to tearfully watch the carriage drive away without her.

Even worse than those treacherous guns were the fears that awaited her when she was put to bed and left alone in the dark. As the light was carried away, Betsy watched it disappear with despairing eyes. It was like the setting of the last star of hope, leaving her in a dark world of terror. All day long the shadow of those dark hours cast a gloom even over the sunny hours spent in the old garden, and sometimes when someone spoke to her suddenly, or even looked at her, she burst into frightened tears. Poor little maid, she was desperately ashamed of those tears, and tried to excuse them by saying that she thought her eyes were very weak.

In summer-time, when the other children rejoiced at the thought of going to the seaside, and talked of bathing and wading and digging castles on the sands, Betsy was very silent, and another fear crept out and seized her with a cruel grip. She was terrified of bathing. To be carried out into that wide cold sea, to feel everything solid slipping away, to know that in a moment her breath would be stopped and her eyes blinded by a downward plunge into unknown depths, was all something too awful, too hopelessly terrifying to think about.

Betsy could only hug herself in silent misery. The joys of heaven were for her all summed up in that one comforting sentence, "And there was no more sea."

She never dreamed of telling anyone about her haunting fears. That was quite an impossible thing to do. Even when they so tormented her that she burst into tears, she would never tell the reason of her unhappiness. The worst of such fears as these is that they must be borne alone.

Betsy was not very strong and not very fond of lessons, and her governess came to the conclusion that she was both stupid and obstinate. She was certainly not very bright where lessons were concerned, and she was rather fond of her own opinion, but she might have done much better if she had been encouraged a little. Because everyone said she was stupid she never tried to be anything else, but only sighed and wished she was as clever as Catherine or Rachel, her two elder sisters.

She was very fond of Rachel, and they shared their books and pictures and curiosities together, and had a little set of tea-things of their very own.

There was no doubt that if Betsy was not very clever she had an extremely loving little heart, but that very love often added to the number of her fears.

The thought that her dearly loved mother might some day die and leave her was a terrible thought, and she would sometimes follow her about from place to place like a faithful little dog, afraid of letting her out of her sight. At night in the darkness, when this fear drove all the others away and grew so tall and overpowering that there was no room for any other, she used to hide her head under the bedclothes and wish with

all her heart that two large walls might crush the whole family dead together, so that no one would be left to mourn for another.

Often in the daytime, when the dear mother was resting and lay asleep in her room, Betsy would steal up close to the bed and listen "with exquisite anxiety" to hear if she were really alive and breathing. There seemed to be no rest for the child from these dark and gloomy fears.

Delicate, timid, rather stupid, terrified of the dark, frightened of the sea, surely this was scarcely the stuff of which a heroine was to be made? So we might think, did we not bear in mind the Master hand that moulds the clay, and realise the wonderful strength and courage which is given to those who are "called to be saints."

GEORGE STEPHENSON

THERE was no one in all the village so great a favourite with the children as "old Bob," the fireman who worked at the pumping-engine of Wylam Colliery. Bob's engine was the place where all the little ones gathered whenever they had time to spare, and they were always sure of a welcome. There was no one who could tell such wonderful and exciting stories as Bob, and while he tended the engine fire he would hold them all spellbound with his tales of the sailor called Sindbad, and the man called Robinson Crusoe, and many other stories which he made up out of his own head.

It was no wonder that the children loved Bob, for he was so kind and gentle with them, and they had so few pleasures in their little lives that his stories were their greatest treat. But other admirers besides the children gathered round Bob as he worked at his engine fire. There was scarcely a bird or an animal about the place that did not know him and look upon him as a friend. In winter-time the robins grew so bold and friendly that they would scarcely let him eat his dinner in peace, but came flocking about him ready to take their share of his very meagre meal. At his cottage the blackbirds were as much at home as any of his children, flying in and out

and expecting to be fed just as if they were part of the family.

There were six little hungry mouths to feed at the cottage besides the birds, and Bob and his careful wife often found it very difficult to make both ends meet, for his wages were only twelve shillings a week. "They war an honest family, but sair hadden doon i' th' world," said their kindly neighbours.

It was no easy matter then to feed and clothe the children, and schooling of course was quite out of the question. It was a luxury not to be thought of for a moment.

All Bob's children loved their father, but it was little George, the second son, born on June 9, 1781, who was the most devoted of his admirers. To sit by the engine fire and listen to those wonderful stories was his greatest delight in life, only equalled when his father took him bird-nesting and let him peep into some nest where the dainty eggs lay cosy and warm, or the young birds opened their mouths and gaped for worms. All his father's friends, birds, beasts, and creeping things, were George's friends as well.

Not that there was very much time for listening to stories or bird-nesting, for George could seldom afford to be idle. As soon as he could stand firmly on his feet and understand what a message meant, he was sent on errands to the village, and then, having shown he was wise and trustworthy, he was allowed to carry his father's dinner, and that was a proud day indeed. Not only did he feel a responsible man, and a help to his mother, but it meant a rest by his father's side, and a stay perhaps, and at any rate the joy of feeding the robins and making friends with them.

At home George, or Geordie as he was called, was a very careful little nurse, and helped to look after his younger brothers and sisters and to take care of the baby. That kept him fairly busy, as you may suppose, for the coal waggons ran past the cottage door, dragged by horses along the wooden rails, and it was no easy matter to keep his charges out of danger.

The coal at Wylam was worked out by the time George was eight years old, and Bob with his family had to "follow the work" and move on to Dewley Burn Colliery. By this time George was old enough to be thinking of finding work himself to help on the family, for there was no room for idle hands in the cottage as soon as the hands were big enough to earn even a few pence a day. George was only too eager to begin, but work was not so easy to find. He was a very determined child, and no difficulty could ever daunt him. Somehow or other the difficulties that stood in his way were always overcome.

There was one day when he went into Newcastle with his sister Nell to buy a bonnet, going merely "for company," for a boy's taste in bonnets was not to be relied upon. Nell very soon found the one she wanted at a shop in the Bigg Market, but alas, when she asked its price she found it cost one shilling and threepence more than she possessed.

Very much downcast, Nell left the shop and explained her disappointment to her brother.

"Never heed, Nell," he said; "see if I canna win siller enough to buy the bonnet. Stand ye there till I come back."

So there Nell stood, patiently enough at first, but as time went on growing more and more anxious as

Geordie never appeared. It began to grow dusk and the market-place was almost empty, and then at last, when she was quite sure he had been run over and killed, he came running towards her breathless with haste.

"I've gotten the siller for the bonnet, Nell," he cried proudly. He might be only eight years old, but he felt every inch a man.

"Eh, Geordie," she said, "but hoo hae ye gotten it?"

"Haudin' the gentlemen's horses," was his reply, and he triumphantly counted out fifteen pennies into her hand, and the bonnet was bought.

Holding horses paid very well as far as it went, but it was regular work and a regular wage George wanted, and at last to his joy he heard they were needing a boy to herd the cows at the farm close by. He applied at once for the post, and felt he was a made man when he got it.

The pay was twopence a day and the work was light, and the little herd boy was as happy as a king. There was plenty of time to hunt for birds' nests while the cows were quietly feeding, and to make magic whistles out of the reeds and the rowan-tree suckers.

"He cut a sappy sucker from the muckle rodden tree,
He trimmed it an' he wat it, an' he thumped it on his knee,
He never heard the teuchat when the harrow broke her eggs,
He missed the craggit heron nabbin' puddocks in the seggs,
He forgot to hound the collie on the cattle when they strayed,
But you should hae heard the whistle that the wee herd made!"

But unlike the "wee herd" of the poem, Geordie

was never "shod again for school," but winter and summer alike he earned his twopence a day and brought his wages home like a man.

His father's engine was still the thing he loved best of all, and in his leisure moments he set to work to make a model of it in clay which was greatly admired by the pitman. He had wonderfully clever fingers, and with a few pieces of wood, some string and old corks, he also rigged up a winding-machine which could actually be made to work.

Herding was all very well for a time, but in his secret heart George had determined that some day he would become an engineman. Meanwhile there was nothing for it but to bide his time and do the work that lay nearest to his hand well and thoroughly. He made such a good little herd that very soon he was taken on to lead the horses when they were ploughing, although his little legs were still so short that he could scarcely stride across the furrows. In the early winter mornings, long before it was light, when other children were still lying snug and warm in bed, George was astir climbing on to the back of the big cart-horse and riding off to his work, now proudly earning a wage of fourpence a day.

But at last he placed his foot on the first step of the ladder which was to lead to the goal of his hopes —he was hired as a "picker" at the pit where his father worked. His work was only to pick out all the pieces of stone and dross from among the coal, but it was work that had some connection with the engine, and that was enough for Geordie. He and the engine were both doing work for the colliery, and some day he was determined they could do the work together.

The busy, careful little picker erelong was found to be able to undertake more responsible work, and George was set to drive the horse that worked the "gin." The gin was a machine for drawing up coals or water from the mine, and was worked by a horse that was driven round and round in a circular track, and the knowledge George had gained with the ploughing horses made him a smart little driver. Now indeed he felt he was on the high road to success.

He was now a "grit growing lad in bare legs and feet," as one of the old miners described him, and was very quick and full of fun and tricks. There was not much time in his busy life for games and sports, but he could beat any boy of his age at wrestling, and he was a champion at lifting heavy weights.

Like his father he had a great love for animals and birds, and there was scarcely a nest in the fields round about that he did not know of. Of all the birds the blackbird was his favourite, and when he found one of their nests he used to watch it day by day until the eggs were hatched and the birds nearly grown, and then he took two or three of the young birds home with him and kept them in the cottage. They were never put into cages, but learned to fly about the room, and afterwards when they were full grown they flew away out of doors all day, but in the evening always returned to roost on the top of the bed. Then when springtime came and the time for nest-building, they departed to the woods, but always came back again when their children were reared and their responsibilities were over.

When George was fourteen he took another step upwards on the ladder he had set himself to climb, for

he was then made assistant fireman and helped his father to work his beloved engine at the Dewley colliery. It was a great step upwards and he was young for such a post, so his one fear was that the master, seeing how small he was, might think he was not fit for the work, nor worth being paid a shilling a day. He was so anxious about this that he always kept a bright look-out, and when he saw the master coming he slipped away and hid himself until the danger was past.

That was the only cloud in his sky, for the work itself he loved, however hard it was, and he knew he could do it. To work about the engine, to be near it all day, to learn to know every bit of it was the one desire of his heart. Ever since the days when he had made little clay models, he had been keen on knowing more and more about it, and some day he meant to know all there was to know.

There stood the boy, barefooted, poorly clad, often hungry, but with the determination in his heart that was to rise above all difficulties. There was no one to help him, he had never gone to school, no one had taught him anything except the good lessons of obedience, honesty, and kindness to animals which he had learned from his father and mother's example. With determined perseverance he taught himself all that he knew, fighting his way steadily upwards and onwards with only the help of his own good right arm and the brain which God had given him.

Whatever happened, George meant to succeed, but even he did not yet dream of what that success was to mean to the world.

It was not until he was nineteen that he learned his

A B C, for then he was able to pay the school fee of threepence a week out of his own wages.

But meanwhile whatever piece of work came in his way George tried to do it thoroughly and well, and to the best of his ability. Whenever he found there was something he could learn, he set himself to learn it with all his might.

That was how George Stephenson's childhood was spent, and it was a splendid preparation for the great work before him, when he should bring a new power and force into the world. All honour, then, to the boy who by the strength of his own right arm won such a great victory in the battle of life.

SIR JOHN FRANKLIN

THERE were already eight children in the house at Spilsby when John was born on the 15th of April 1786. The arrival of a new baby was quite an ordinary event in that large family, but John was to have the special distinction of being the youngest son, and to enjoy all the privileges of a Benjamin. All the other brothers and sisters teased and spoiled him by turns, but perhaps on the whole there was more spoiling than teasing, for he was such a frail, delicate child that everyone was inclined to treat him gently.

For the first three years of his life it seemed as if John would never live to grow up, but after that he suddenly began to grow much stronger, and before very long was quite able to hold his own with the other children. He was a great favourite with everyone, and had what the old nurse called "a way with him" which no one could resist, and no spoiling seemed to hurt him. He was a sunny-tempered child, easily managed, never cross or fretful, and willing to be friendly with all the world. Indeed he was exactly the sort of small boy which nowadays an elder brother would describe as "a jolly little chap."

Of course John had his faults like everyone else, and his mother shook her head over what she considered two very serious defects in his character. He was very untidy, and he was extremely curious. Whatever was

going on, John must always try to find out all about it, and when he had once set his mind on some discovery there was no turning him from it. All the other children were "neat and orderly," but John was seldom fit to be seen. Either his socks sagged under his heels, or there was a tear in his coat, or his frill was lost. Something was always amiss, and as to his hands and face, no sooner were they washed than they began at once to get dirty again. He was not at all a credit to the family, and unfortunately he could never be kept in the background, out of sight, for he always wanted to be in the front row and to see everything that was going on.

Now on the opposite side of the street stood the house of a very grand gentleman, at whose door many carriages used to draw up and many grand visitors paid daily calls. The sight of those visitors in their silks and satins fascinated little John, and he loved to stand and watch them arriving and departing. This, however, did not please John's mother. It was not at all seemly that an untidy, grubby little boy should stand in full view of these genteel visitors, and so John was "strictly forbidden to go over the way and stare at this daily spectacle." The child, however, "seemed utterly incapable of putting a curb on his curiosity," and time after time he disobeyed, until at last there was nothing for it but to whip him.

On the landing of the staircase there hung a whip, placed there as a terror to evil-doers, but seldom taken down. It was merely a reminder of what might happen, just as the tawse is hung up in Scotch households. But now the whip was solemnly taken down and John suffered some well-deserved pain. Even that,

however, did not cure him, for we are told that "though the boy was in no way rebellious in any other point, neither entreaty nor whipping could prevent his punctual attendance at the opposite door whenever a carriage drew up."

So the child who was to be a great explorer began very early to show how determined he could be when he had set his heart upon anything. His childish curiosity and naughty disobedience were scarcely a thirst for discovery, but the determination was the same, and he showed himself quite ready to endure punishment and whippings just as afterwards he cheerfully suffered cold, darkness, and hardships in the Arctic regions, when he had set his heart on his great discovery.

As John grew older he began to show a tremendous love for adventure, and whatever daring deed the other boys performed, he was always eager to do something more daring still. Sometimes the boys would begin to talk of the great things they meant to do and the exciting adventures that would be sure to happen to them when they were men, and each one planned some tremendously heroic action, until at last, when it came to John's turn to say what he meant to do, there seemed nothing left for him to choose. But as usual he was not to be outdone, and he had his plan all ready.

"I am going to build a ladder," he said grandly, "so high that I shall be able to climb up to heaven."

Of course it was pointed out to him that a ladder couldn't stand upright unless it leaned against something, but he explained that it was a difficulty which he meant to overcome. What was the use of difficulties except to be overcome? he asked.

Although John's home at Spilsby was not many miles inland, it had nothing to do with any seaport town, and it was not until he was ten years old and was sent to the grammar school at Louth that he first heard the call of the sea.

He had started off one fine holiday with another boy to find their way to Saltfleet, which was ten miles distant, meaning to have a good time, but little dreaming of the change which that day was to make in his life. He was keenly interested in seeing a new place, but he had no idea of the wonder that awaited him. That first sight of the sea stirred his very soul.

In a moment it seemed to him that this was what he had been seeking for ever since he was born. The great mysterious sea, stretching away until it seemed to touch the sky, was the ladder of which he had dreamed. The sound of its breaking waves, the deep rolling swell, seemed to call to him as a friend, and instantly he recognised the voice and answered it with all his heart. He would be a sailor, and he would be nothing else.

Full of this great idea, with the sound of the sea ever in his ears, and the longing for it tugging at his heart, John lost no time in letting his father know, now that he had made up his mind to be a sailor. He little knew with what displeasure the news would be received at home.

"It is absolute nonsense," declared John's father, "I shall not consider it for a moment. The boy simply wants to escape from the drudgery of school, and, like every other boy, imagines that to go to sea is the way to great and stirring adventures. I will not hear of such a thing."

So John was sternly told that he might put the idea out of his head at once, and that he had better make up his mind to attend to his lessons.

It was no easy matter, however, to turn John from any settled purpose, and he quietly persisted in his request until at last his father grew very angry.

"I would rather follow my son to the grave than to the sea," he thundered, and forbade the subject to be mentioned again.

For two years John worked steadily at his school lessons, and did his very best with them, although his heart was set as firmly as ever on the hope of becoming a sailor. It was the best way to show his determination, for it would never do for a sailor to shirk any kind of work. He was a great favourite with his schoolfellows and everyone else, for he possessed that most wonderful gift called "charm," which is as full of magic as any wizard's spell. Everyone loved the sunny-tempered, merry-looking boy, so brave and frank and friendly, "so quick to resent a slight, and so ready to forgive it."

It was a great disappointment to his father when John showed no signs of outgrowing his desire to go to sea. The two years' discipline of school life seemed only to have strengthened his determination, and as time had proved no cure, it seemed wise now to try another remedy.

It was such an easy thing to talk of being a sailor while living comfortably at home, and looking at the sea life through rose-coloured spectacles. The first real experience of rough life on board ship was usually enough to disenchant anyone. So it was decided that John should be sent off on a cruise in a

merchant ship which traded between Hull and Lisbon, and it was to be hoped that this taste of life at sea would make him a wiser and a sadder boy.

It was all in vain. John returned home in great spirits, keener than ever. No hardships could daunt him, his heart was set on becoming a sailor. His father now saw that it was wiser to give in, for this was no mere boyish fancy, and he sorrowfully gave his consent. A berth was procured for the boy on board the *Polyphemus*, and it was arranged that an elder brother should take him up to London, see to his uniform and his outfit, and send him to join his ship.

The elder brother did not much relish the job. In a letter home, he complained bitterly of the trouble of "continually running after this clothes-buying business," but in spite of his annoyance he could not help feeling rather proud of his small brother when he was rigged out in all the bravery of his new uniform, and he was forced to admit in the same letter that "the dirk and the cocked hat are rather attractive parts of his dress."

At last, when all was ready, the little midshipman, cocked hat and dirk complete, joined his ship, and set sail for the north, the *Polyphemus* being part of the English fleet, under the command of Sir Hyde Parker, with Nelson as second in command.

From the calm quiet of the Lincolnshire home, where nothing very exciting ever happened and where adventures were only to be met with in dreams, John suddenly plunged into the wildest and most exciting of times, and was in the thick of the most terrible sea-battle which Nelson ever fought.

That glorious Battle of the Baltic was young

Franklin's baptism of fire, and it was a dreadful experience for the small midshipman. He himself escaped unhurt, but around him were the dead and dying, their groans mingling in his ears with the roar of the guns. The sea was covered with pieces of wreckage lit up by the lurid light of burning ships, and as they anchored in Elsinore harbour and he looked over into the clear water, he could see the dead bodies lying thick there at the bottom, English and Danes together.

But there was a glorious side as well to the horrors of that day. Such deeds of daring and bravery had been done as made John's heart glow with pride to think that he had had even the smallest share in the great victory. It was the unconquerable spirit of the English sailor which made Nelson that day clap his blind eye to the telescope, and refuse to see the signal to retire, as he nailed his colours to the mast and fought on until the Danes were beaten.

No wonder that the little midshipman was proud to belong to such a navy and such a country, and he was surer than ever that there was nothing in all the world so fine as to be an English sailor. His only fear now was that he might miss the chance of going on an expedition to the South Seas, which it had been arranged that he should join, before sailing for Elsinore, but luckily for him the *Polyphemus* was ordered home at once after the great battle, and he was just in time to be transferred to the *Investigator*, which was bound on a voyage of discovery. The captain, Matthew Flinders, was an uncle of young Franklin, and took a special interest in the boy and spared no pains to turn him out a good sailor.

"It is with great pleasure," he wrote home, "that I tell you of the good conduct of John. He is a very fine youth, and there is every probability of his doing credit to the *Investigator* and himself. His attention to his duty has gained him the esteem of the first Lieutenant, who scarcely knows how to talk enough in his praise."

It must not be imagined that it was all smooth sailing for John, and that everything was made charming for him on board. He had his own hard work to do, and many a hardship to endure besides a certain amount of bullying. One of the officers especially took advantage of the boy's keenness and made him do a great deal of extra work, taking all the credit of it to himself. John naturally resented this, but he never complained, and doggedly got through both his own share of work and that of the lazy bully, which certainly did him no harm.

It was not long, however, before his time on board the *Investigator* came to a sudden end. The ship was a poor one and quite untrustworthy, and at the first breakdown it was found impossible to repair her. There was nothing for it but to ship all the crew back to England in another vessel, and it was only the beginning of a long series of misadventures.

The vessel on which the crew of the *Investigator* set sail was wrecked almost immediately afterwards in the Torres Straits, and it was only with great difficulty that the men managed to land on a sandbank and to save stores enough to keep them from starving. It was quite as exciting as any Robinson Crusoe adventure, and not nearly so pleasant, for the sandbank was much worse than a desert island. The only thing to be done

was to rig up tents for shelter and hoist a blue ensign with the Union Jack on a tall spar, in the hope that some passing ship might see their signal of distress.

There was luckily enough food to last them for some time, and so it was decided that one of the six-oared boats should be manned and the captain should try and find his way back to Sydney and bring relief.

It was weary waiting week after week on the desolate sandbank, watching the provisions grow less and less, but John always kept up a stout heart, and at last there was a cry of wild delight as the look-out man caught sight of a sail bearing towards them. It was the relief boats at last, and no time was lost in taking the men off and arranging for their return to England.

Young Franklin with some others of the crew were shipped to Canton, where they found a fleet of homeward-bound merchantmen, and so once more gaily set sail for home.

In those days it was no uncommon fate for a merchantman to be captured on the high seas by an enemy or taken by a privateer, and so they all carried guns and were as ready to fight as a man-o'-war. As luck would have it, scarcely had young Franklin set sail again towards home when a powerful French squadron was sighted which bore down upon them, evidently expecting to make an easy and valuable capture.

Now instead of running away as the French naturally expected them to do, the merchantmen turned about and prepared to give fight, which mightily astonished the enemy, and so well did the guns behave that in a quarter of an hour the French drew off, having had more than enough. Then came the order from the English commander for a "general chase," and the

little fleet of merchantmen actually drove the French squadron of war before them for nearly two hours. Then at last the commander considered that his honour was satisfied, and recalled his pursuing ships and proceeded once more on his way.

It is not difficult to picture the delight of young Franklin in that extraordinary chase, and it was no wonder he was proud of being a British sailor, born to rule the waves. Arrived at home, the boy was specially mentioned in the captain's report: "I beg leave to present to the notice of the Hon. Court, Mr. Franklin, and Mr. Olive, midshipmen in His Majesty's navy, who were cast away with Lieut. Fowler in the *Porpoise*, and who were, as well as that gentleman, passengers for England on board the *Earl Camden*. Whatever may have been the merits of others, theirs in their station were equally conspicuous, and I should find it difficult in the ship's company to name anyone, who for zeal and alacrity of service and for general good conduct could advance a stronger claim to approbation and reward."

That was surely a good home-coming for young John, and a good showing that his love for the sea was no idle fancy or desire to shirk work. In spite of all the dangers and disasters, the boy had enjoyed every bit of it and was full of a "cheery contentment."

He could no longer now be called a child, but he was still but a young midshipman when he fought at the Battle of Trafalgar and once more shared the glory of a victory under Nelson, a victory which made the British flag "supreme on every sea."

But the young sailor's heart was set on something else besides the glory of victorious fighting. The keen love of discovery, the call of the unknown, was in his

blood, and, like many another of England's heroes, he could not rest while there was a blank space upon the map to be filled in.

To discover the North-West Passage was the dream of his life, and there, among the ice-walls of his Arctic prison, he laid down his life fighting to the last to conquer the unknown. The boy who had answered so faithfully the call of the sea, who had fought for King and country, was of the stuff indeed of which England's heroes are made, and although the place where he was buried is unknown, and so has nothing to mark it as the grave of a hero, yet in Westminster Abbey is a fitting epitaph engraved in marble, as it is graven on many an English heart:

"Not here! the white North hath thy bones and thou,
Heroic sailor soul,
Art passing on thy happier voyage now
Towards no earthly pole."

HANS ANDERSEN

THE ancient town of Odeuse, in Denmark, seems almost as if it was situated on the borders of Fairyland, so full is it of old stories and traditions and curious legends. So it was really the exactly right birthplace for little Hans Andersen, "the future Fairy King," and there he was born on April 2, 1805.

No one could possibly have guessed that this baby held in his tiny mottled fist the golden key to Fairyland, or that he had any connection whatever with fairies. His home was not in the least like a palace, in fact it was only a poor cobbler's room, so small that quite half of it was taken up by the big bed on which the baby lay, while the other half had to serve for workshop, kitchen, and dining-room all in one.

It certainly was a very poor and very small room, but the baby learned to love it as soon as his quick eyes began to look about and take notice of things. There were shining glimpses to be caught of cups and glasses on the top of the chest of drawers, and on the panels of the door were painted beautiful gay pictures of hills and dales and flowers which delighted his heart. Then too, as soon as he grew old enough to toddle out by himself, he brought home all the wild flowers he could find, and with their dear faces smiling

at him he thought this room the loveliest home in all the world.

In the evenings when he was tucked away into the big bed and the cotton curtains were drawn round it, he lay and listened to the tapping of the shoemaker's hammer, and the busy life going on in the room, wide awake and perfectly contented.

"How nice and quiet he is, the blessed child," said his mother, peeping in through the curtains to see if he were asleep, and finding him with wide open eyes smiling happily to himself.

That must have been the beginning of the fairies' work, for they certainly kept him happy and amused all through his babyhood. People might have called those fairies the child's own thoughts and fancies, but any sensible child who knows anything at all about fairies knows better than that. The fairies may have come in with the wild flowers or lay hidden in the fresh birch branches that stood behind the polished stove, or swung to and fro in the branches of sweet herbs that hung from the rafters. At any rate there can be no manner of doubt that they must have lived up above in the roof-garden, although that garden was nothing more than a box of earth where parsley and sweet peas grew. Any one who doubts that has only to read "The Snow Queen" to find there an exact description of little Hans' roof-garden, and if there were no fairies there, how could it have found its way into a real fairy tale?

The father of little Hans was, as we have seen, a cobbler, but he was not very clever at his trade, and instead of mending shoes he was much fonder of building castles in the air or reading the books which crowded into the shelf hung close to the window where

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he worked. He had plenty of time to make toys for his little son, and Hans was the happy possessor of a mill that could work while the miller danced, a peep-show with puppets to act, and all kinds of pictures that changed into different shapes when they were pulled by a string.

Unfortunately this was not the best way of making money, and the cobbler did not grow rich. There came a day, however, when it looked as if fortune meant to smile upon him. The squire of a country village close by needed a shoemaker, and offered a house and a garden, and grass for a cow, to the man who could make a good pair of shoes.

There was great excitement in the cobbler's home when a piece of silk was sent by the squire's lady to be made into a pair of dancing-shoes, and every night Hans, when he said his evening prayers, said a special prayer asking God to help his father to make these shoes most beautifully, so that they might all go to the house with the garden, and the green field for the cow, and live happily ever after.

But when the shoes were finished and the cobbler carried them off rolled up in his apron to the great house, the squire's lady was not at all pleased with them. She said he had quite spoilt her beautiful piece of silk, and she could not think of having such a bungler for the shoemaker.

The poor cobbler listened in silence, and when she had finished he caught up his knife and in a great rage cut the pretty dancing-shoes into ribbons. Then he turned and went sorrowfully home.

So that dream-castle tumbled to pieces, and Hans wept bitterly because he thought God had paid no

attention to his prayers. He was only a very little boy and did not know that God has many ways of answering children's prayers. Perhaps if Hans had gone to live happily in the country as he wished, then he would never have found his way into the much fairer country of Fairyland.

Hans had a mother too, as well as a father, but she was not a very wise mother, and she did not look after him very carefully. Sometimes she spoilt him sadly and allowed him to do whatever he liked, whether it was bad or good, and sometimes she did not trouble herself much about him at all. His best and wisest friend was certainly his old grandmother, who lived close by, and who used to come every day to see her little grandson. All the nice old grandmothers in those fairy tales are just like that grandmother of his. She was always cheerful and kindly and very wise, with a tiny bent figure and the sweetest of blue eyes. Whenever she came she brought Hans a bunch of flowers, and Hans would climb up to the top of the chest and arrange them in the glasses that stood there. He had wonderful hands for arranging flowers, and he used to say, "Flowers know very well that I am fond of them; even if I were to stick a peg into the ground, I believe it would grow." That was quite true. Flowers know, almost as well as little boys and girls, who are fond of them and who are not.

All the old people who lived near the cobbler's house were fond of Hans, and he loved to go and see them and tell them all the things he knew, until they nodded their heads and said, "What a clever child it is;" then in return they would tell him all sorts of stories which they had heard when they were children, and

Hans carefully stored them up in his mind, to tell many years afterwards to other children. There was "The Tinder Box," "The Travelling Companions," and many others that every child knows now.

But although the old people were fond of Hans he was always a lonely child, and never had anyone of his own age to play with. Even when he went to school he never played games with the other boys. They were so rough that they frightened him, and he was much happier sitting by himself and dreaming his dreams.

He did not stay very long at any school, for his parents allowed him to do very much as he liked, and school was not to his taste.

To begin with, his unwise mother had told the schoolmistress at his first school that Hans was never to be whipped, whatever happened, and the good dame quite forgot this one day and gave him a well-deserved tap with the birch-rod.

Hans said never a word, but got up at once, solemnly tucked his book and his slate under his arm, and marched out of the schoolroom. He went straight home and told his mother what had happened, and instead of sending him back to be whipped again, which would certainly have been wise, she took him away from the dame's school and sent him to another.

At this new school Hans was charmed to find a very little girl whom he thought much nicer than the rough boys, and with whom he immediately tried to make friends. The little girl told him that she wanted specially to learn arithmetic, that she might some day be a dairymaid at a grand castle.

Hans at once set to work and drew a splendid castle

on his slate, and told her it was a picture of his very own castle, where she should be dairymaid some day.

"For you know," he said, "I am really a great nobleman, and the castle belongs to me, but when I was a baby the fairies came and took me out of my cradle and carried me off to the cobbler's cottage."

He thought his new friend would love his make-believe stories, just as the old people did, but the stolid little dairymaid looked at him coldly. She did not believe in fairies at all, and she thought that Hans was not telling the truth, or that he was quite mad and foolish.

Poor Hans never tried to tell any more tales after that, but he went on dreaming them all the same.

Of course if a boy spends his time dreaming about fairies he is apt to leave his lessons unlearned, and that was exactly what happened to Hans. He was always in disgrace and never knew his lessons, and his angry master did not feel in the least less angry when the boy presented him with large bunches of wild flowers. The flowers were beautiful, but they could not make up for idleness.

Hans could easily have learned his lessons if he had tried, but he was not fond of lessons and was a great deal too fond of only doing what he liked best. He loved to make doll's clothes and to sit in the yard near the gooseberry bush and watch its leaves unfolding from day to day. There he sat under a tent which he rigged up out of his mother's apron and a broomstick, as happy as a king, and no one sent him back to school or made him learn his lessons.

After the sad business of the dancing-shoes, the poor cobbler grew less and less inclined to work, and at last

went off to be a soldier, hoping to return covered with glory. That castle also tumbled to pieces, for the poor man died before he began to fight. Then his widow married again, and little Hans was left more than ever to himself.

By this time the boy was eleven years old and was growing into a long, lanky, queer-looking lad, with a face that was almost comic in its ugliness.

If ever there was an Ugly Duckling it was Hans Andersen. All the other boys laughed at him, teased him, chased him away and shouted after him, until the poor awkward child longed to run away and hide himself from the cruel, unkind world.

No one understood him, no one knew all the wonderful things that he thought about and the great things that he meant to do. He had begun to read Shakespeare, and had made up his mind to be a great writer of plays, but when it was discovered that Hans Andersen was conceited enough to think he could write, the boys shouted all the more scornfully after him, "There goes the play-scribbler," and tormented him more cruelly than ever.

Hans had a dim idea that the higher born, nobler people would understand him better and treat him more kindly, and certainly one or two of the great families took an interest in the poor cobbler's son. It amused them to hear him recite whole plays from memory, and to see the poetry he tried to write when he knew little about spelling and less about grammar. The boy was certainly clever in some ways, but what could be done with a boy who had left school almost as ignorant as when he went to it?

About this time there dawned a great day in Hans

Andersen's life, the day of his confirmation at St. Knut's Church. It was the Sunday after Easter, and the boy had been thinking a great deal of the promises he was about to make, eager to begin the new life, and anxious to become a true and loyal servant of God.

But it was so difficult to keep his mind from straying to other things. There was his new coat, which had been made for him out of his father's old one. The very thought of it filled him with pride, and above all there was his new pair of boots. He had never worn a pair of boots before, and these were quite new. His only fear was that the people might not notice them, and he was so glad when they creaked loudly as he walked up the aisle. They made so much noise that no one could help looking at them.

Then suddenly as he walked up, filled with delight over his coat and the creaking of his new boots, he remembered where he was and what he was doing, and he hung his head with shame to think that at such a time he should think more of his new boots than about God.

He never forgot how he felt that day, and he remembered it with sorrowful shame for many long years afterwards. Indeed it was the remembrance of those very confirmation boots which made him write the story of "The Red Shoes."

But now it was time that Hans set to work in earnest, for after being confirmed he was a child no longer. His mother did not know what to do with him, but Hans had quite made up his mind to go away to Copenhagen to make his fortune.

"You go through a frightful lot of hardships first," he explained, "and then you become famous."

So the Ugly Duckling set out to see the world, quite certain that he was going to live happily ever afterwards, as the fairy tales say.

He little guessed all that lay before him, and how truly "frightful" those hardships were to be. All that he had neglected to learn had still to be learned, he was to suffer hunger and cold and bitter want, and again, like the Ugly Duckling, to be driven away, laughed at, despised, and persecuted.

But the beautiful ending to the fairy tale was to be his too. Hans Andersen, the queer, uncouth boy, was to become Hans Andersen the author, whose beautiful thoughts and dream pictures made him famous throughout all lands, and who, with the golden key, unlocked for all children the gates of Fairyland.

Like the swan who had once been the Ugly Duckling, "he now felt glad at having suffered sorrow and trouble, because it enabled him to enjoy so much better all the pleasure and happiness around him."

At the end he forgot all the hardships and sorrows of his life. He only remembered the beautiful things, and kept always the sunny heart of a little child, so that he could say at the last, when he came to the very end of the fairy tale, "Oh, how happy I am! How beautiful the world is! Life is so beautiful! It is just as if I were sailing into a land far, far away, where there is no pain, no sorrow."

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

It was certainly a cold and comfortless way of beginning life to be born in a log cabin, especially when it was winter-time, and the cabin had no door to keep out the wind, and no window to let in the light. Abraham Lincoln could scarcely have started life in a poorer home than that little log cabin, set in the midst of a barren and desolate wilderness in the State of Kentucky, where he first opened his eyes on the world on February 12, 1809.

It was to he hoped that the new baby would grow into a strong, brave boy, for there was no use for weaklings in the rough, dangerous life that awaited him. Even his mother, who rocked him in her arms, had early learned to handle a rifle that she might defend herself and her children when the father, Thomas Lincoln, was away. They were accustomed to all sorts of dangers and hardships, for there were many wild animals in the woods, and they were never quite safe from the fear of Indians.

When Abraham, or Abe as he was called, grew old enough to care for stories, there was nothing he loved better than to stand at his father's knee and listen to the tales of his adventures with the Redskins, and most thrilling of all, the story of his grandfather's death.

When Thomas Lincoln was about six years old he

went out one day into the fields with his father to help with the building of a fence, while his two elder brothers were at work close by in another field, and his mother was busy at home in the log hut.

Suddenly, when the little boy was helping his father to put up the fence, a party of Indians, hidden close by, fired upon them and his father fell dead, shot through the heart. The two bigger boys, hearing the noise of firing, did the best thing they could, one running off to fetch help from the nearest settler, and the other creeping home as swiftly and secretly as possible and climbing into the loft with his gun. From a loophole in the wall he could see the Indians below, and at the very moment he peered out there was one of them just about to lift little Thomas off his feet. A well-directed shot from the loft struck the Indian and killed him, whereupon the child took to his heels, and ran like a rabbit until he reached the shelter of the log hut.

Meanwhile the brave elder brother was calmly aiming and firing at every Redskin whose head appeared for a moment out of the ambush, and he blazed away until the relief party arrived and the band of Indians were put to flight.

Abe listened round-eyed with interest to tales like these, though he was not sorry to think that the Indians were driven further off now and were seldom to be seen. He and his sister Sarah were quite safe if they did not wander too far from home, and they could fetch and carry water from the creek and make themselves useful in many ways out of doors.

At six years old Abe had learned to fish and to hunt, although he was still too small to be trusted with a gun. One of his favourite amusements was to swing

across the creek holding on to the branch of a sycamore tree, and one day while he and another small boy were enjoying themselves in that way, Abe lost his hold and disappeared with a terrific splash into the water below. The other boy was quite equal to the occasion, and, waiting till he reappeared, leaned over and dragged him out with the greatest difficulty. If it had not been for the presence of mind of the other child, Abe would certainly have been drowned and America would never have known one of the greatest and most famous of her presidents.

"It is time those children had some learning," said their father thoughtfully, when Abe was seven years old and his sister a year or so older. "There's a man come to that shanty half a mile away, and he says he is going to keep a school. What do you say to sending the children to him?"

"Well," said their mother doubtfully, "he is a queer sort of man to be a schoolmaster. He can't write himself."

"He can read, so he says," replied Thomas Lincoln, "and the children could learn that, anyway."

Thomas Lincoln had spent such a busy roving life that he had never had time to learn either to read or to write, and at the time he was married he could not even sign his own name. His wife had had a little education and was determined that he should at least learn to write his name, so with great patience she taught him how to hold a pen and make the letters, although his great strong hands were much more at home holding his gun or his axe. But nevertheless he was most anxious that his children should learn all that he had missed, although it puzzled him greatly to think

where the money was to come from to pay their schooling.

There was certainly not much to be learned at this first school to which Abe was sent, and in a few weeks the children knew as much as their master, which was saying but little.

There was a better school four miles away where the master could both read and write, and although it was a long way for the children to walk, they were sturdy and strong, and set off gaily each morning, carrying their dinner of hoe cake, which was all the dinner they ever had.

The log cabin could now boast the beginning of a library, for besides the Bible and Catechism there was an old spelling-book out of which the children learned their lessons. The Bible was the one book which Abe had known from his babyhood, for his mother read it aloud every Sunday and sometimes on other days too. It was both story-book and lesson-book, for the stories Abe knew before he could read, and his first reading-lessons were spelled out from it.

It was when Abe was about eight years old that he began to learn to know what it really meant to be a pioneer boy. The farm in Kentucky was not a very successful affair, and Thomas Lincoln made up his mind to try his luck in the new free State of Indiana, where there seemed better prospects of getting on.

It was a journey of a hundred miles from the old home in Kentucky to the new one in Indiana, and while the father took most of their belongings by boat, the mother and two children set out on the

journey overland, with two horses to carry the bedding and on which they could ride by turns when they were tired. They were seven days on the road, and at night the little party camped out under the stars with their blankets spread on the ground. It was not a very safe way of travelling, and there was many a danger lurking around, but neither mother nor children dreamed of being afraid. Fear was a thing with which pioneers had nothing to do.

When at last the whole family arrived in Spence County, Indiana, the first thing to be done was to build some sort of shelter for themselves and their goods. A road had been cut through the forests, but all the clearing had still to be done, and there was plenty of work for Abe, small as he was. His little axe was needed for serious work now, and not only for play, as he was quite able to cut the poles for the cabin which his father was building. In a very short time he learned to use his axe as a pioneer boy should do.

At first it was only possible to build a "half-faced camp," which was merely a cabin enclosed on three sides with one side open, and which, in spite of the log fires, was a bitterly cold shelter in winter-time. But when spring came and the land was cleared enough to plant corn and vegetables, a strong log hut was begun, and Abe lent a willing hand, remembering the bitter winds of the past winter.

It was hard work, for the great unhewn logs had all to be notched and fitted together and the crevices filled with clay; and then there was the loft to be made and a door and window fitted in.

Abe learned, too, how to make stools and a table,

and by this time the muscles of his arms were like whipcord, and he could swing his axe like a man.

A story is told of him in after days of how he visited a hospital of wounded soldiers and shook hands with three thousand of them, all eager to grip the hand of their hero. Some friends looking on said that they wondered his arm was not crippled by so much handshaking, but he only smiled and said, "The hardships of my early life gave me strong muscles."

Then he went to the open door and took up a heavy axe which was lying there, and began to chop a log of wood so vigorously that the chips flew about in all directions. When he stopped he "extended his right arm to full length, holding the axe out horizontally without its even quivering as he held it." Strong men who looked on—men accustomed to manual labour—could not hold the axe in that position for a moment.

After learning to be so useful with his axe, it was only fair that Abe should be taught to handle a rifle, and his father promised to begin to teach him at once.

"You'll be able to go hunting and shoot turkey and deer, and will keep us supplied with game," said his father.

Abe's eyes glistened, and he could scarcely sleep that night in his corner of the loft, he was so delighted and excited over the thought of that rifle. A rifle is rather a difficult thing for a small boy of eight to manage, but Abe was determined to learn to shoot, and in a short time he covered himself with glory.

"Mother, mother!" he cried, bursting like a small

whirlwind into the cabin, "there's a flock of turkeys out there. I'm sure I could shoot one if I might have the rifle."

His mother looked out through one of the loopholes of the log hut.

"Sure enough," she said, "they are turkeys. You might try a shot," and she fetched the gun, which was always kept ready loaded.

Abe bobbed up and down excitedly while his mother fixed the gun into the loophole and warned him to be careful. Then he steadied himself, tried to take aim, and pulled the trigger.

Bang! went the gun, and back went Abe almost head over heels, but in an instant he scrambled up and rushed out. The smoke was just clearing away, and sure enough there on the ground lay a large fat turkey, shot dead.

"I've killed one," shouted Abe, "and it's a monster. Mother, did you ever see such a big one?" and he struggled to lift the bird on high for her to see.

Just then his father came hurrying up.

"What's all this firing about?" he asked anxiously.

"I've killed a turkey," said Abe, bursting with pride.

"Did you do that?" asked his father in amazement.

"Nobody else did it," said Abe with a chuckle. Of course it was nothing but an accident, and altogether the fault of the turkey for getting in the way of the bullet, but it was a great triumph for Abe all the same.

All this time Abe had kept on steadily with his reading whenever he had time, especially in the long winter evenings when he could read by the firelight.

Lamps and candles were luxuries no settler could afford, but wood was plentiful, and it was easy to heap the fire high and make a splendid blaze.

He was careful, too, not to forget his writing, and he practised writing his own name in the snow or with a charred stick on slabs of wood. His father was not always pleased to find every smooth surface in the house scrawled over with black marks, but he had a great respect for "learning," and when he found that Abe was teaching himself to write, he was quite proud of the boy.

When spring came round and they were working together in the fields, Abe took a stick and began writing his name with great care in the soft earth. "A.B.R.A.H.A.M L.I.N.C.O.L.N," he wrote.

"What is the boy doing?" asked a neighbour who happened to be passing and stopped to talk to Thomas Lincoln.

"Oh! he's writing," said his father carelessly.

The man looked astonished.

"Can he write?" he asked. "What does the writing say?"

"It's my name," said Abe, spelling the letters out one by one and pointing to them in turn.

The two men looked with respectful admiration at the young genius and shook their heads. Such cleverness was beyond them. Little did they dream that the name of Abraham Lincoln would some day be written, not only on the soil of Indiana but in every annal of the United States.

As time went on, Abe began to long for other books to read besides the Bible, the Catechism, and the old spelling-book. There must surely be many other books

in the world, he thought, but the difficulty was to get hold of them.

Then a sad thing happened which for a while made him forget all about his longing for books. His mother died suddenly, and the little family in the log hut was left very desolate.

Sarah was only eleven years old and could not manage the housework very well, although Abe was very handy and helped her a good deal. The home soon began to look neglected and untidy, and Abe felt his mother's loss keenly. Indeed it seemed as if all the sunshine had faded out of his life until one evening when his father returned carrying a parcel under his arm.

"I've found something that will please you, my boy," he said kindly, and undoing the parcel he brought out the *Pilgrim's Progress*.

"Where did you find it?" asked Abe wonderingly. Such things were not usually to be found in the woods or fields, neither did they drop from heaven.

"I didn't exactly find it," said his father, smiling. "I saw it when I was in Pierson's house and borrowed it for you."

Abe was turning over the leaves, and he took a deep breath of delight.

"It looks good," he said.

He was so eager to begin that he could eat no supper, and when he had finished reading it he turned back and began it all over again. The book made him so happy that his father tried to get him another, and this time it was *Æsop's Fables*, which charmed Abe even more than the *Pilgrim's Progress* had done. He read it so often that he could erelong repeat most of the fables by heart.

Abe's mind was very good ground in which to sow such seed, and in after life it blossomed out into a wonderful power of story-telling and a marvellous memory for anecdotes.

But although reading was very pleasant it was somewhat apt to interfere with the day's work, and by and by Abe's father began to grow impatient.

"Come, put away your book, there's too much work to be done to waste time over reading," said his father.

"In a minute," said Abe.

"That's what makes boys lazy," said his father, "reading books when they ought to be at work."

"Only a minute, and then I'll go," said Abe, scarcely paying any attention to what his father was saying.

That of course could not be allowed.

"Put the book down and come at once," said his father sternly.

Abe shut the book slowly and most unwillingly.

"Good boys should obey at once," said his father; "they should not need to be driven like cattle."

Abe had never before shown any signs of disobedience and he did not mean to be disobedient now, but those books seemed to lay a spell upon him which it was difficult to resist.

His father began to fear he was growing lazy, and everyone shook their heads over the boy and his books. His cousin Denis declared that "Abe was always reading, scribbling, ciphering, writing poetry and such like," and that he was "awful lazy"; but it was a curious kind of laziness, for it meant seizing every scrap of spare time between work to study, and sitting up late into the night to read his beloved books. He was so hungry for knowledge that he could not keep

away from books although "he had not a lazy bone in his body." He could not help dreaming a little, and sometimes the threshing and chopping and other work suffered, but who could help dreaming over the delights of *Robinson Crusoe* and the *Life of Washington* which just then, at ten years old, opened a new world to him.

After a while life became more cheerful in the log hut, for Thomas Lincoln married again, and the new stepmother brought brightness and comfort into the home once more. She was a widow with three children, which made a merry party in the log cabin, and she also had a quantity of furniture and household goods, so that in a short time the log hut was transformed into quite an elegant abode.

The first thing the new stepmother insisted upon was that a wooden flooring should be laid down, and also that there should be real glass windows and a door with hinges. The children's clothes, too, were made neat and tidy, and there was something else for dinner besides hoe cakes.

Abe's stepmother was not inclined to call the boy lazy as other people did when he pored over his books. She was anxious to help him, and when for the first time a school was opened in Indiana, she was anxious that all the children should be sent to it.

"It's a good chance for you, Abe," she said. "You ought to learn something about 'rithmetic as soon as you can."

It was a curious kind of school and a very queer set of pupils. The school was a rough log hut with a roof so low that the master could scarcely stand upright, and the windows were only holes covered with greased

paper which did not allow much light to filter through. The one cheerful thing was the huge fireplace built to hold logs four feet in length.

The children were gathered from far and near, all sizes and in all sorts of garments. Abe rather fancied himself in his new suit, made by his stepmother for the occasion. He had a linsey-woolsey shirt, buckskin breeches, a cap of coon skin, and no coat, for "overcoats were unknown."

There was much for Abe to learn, and the schoolmaster, Andrew Crawford, found it a delight to teach anyone so eager and intelligent.

"Abe is a wonderful boy, the best scholar I ever had," he said to Thomas Lincoln. "He wants to know everything that anyone else knows, and does not see why he can't."

"That's Abe exactly," said his father. "I sometimes wish he liked work as much as he does a book."

"He wouldn't be such a good scholar if he did," said the schoolmaster.

"Maybe," answered his father, "but work is more important than books in the backwoods."

"But Abe is not going to live always in the backwoods," said the master. "He is a boy who is sure to make his mark in the world. He is an honest, straight boy too, as well as being clever. Only the other day I found someone had broken off a buck's horn which I had nailed to the school-house, and when I asked who had done it, Abe immediately owned up and confessed that he had been hanging on to it."

"Ah!" said his father, "that's like him. He's been reading the *Life of Washington* and thought a deal of

that story about his cutting the cherry-tree with his new hatchet and then owning up handsomely."

"Well, he's a good boy," said the schoolmaster, "and he'll go far."

He meant to do his very best for the boy, and besides other things he began to teach his pupils manners and how to behave nicely "in society." The schoolroom was turned into a parlour for the time being, and the children were supposed to be ladies and gentlemen, as they came in one by one and made their bow and were introduced to each other.

It was no easy matter for Abe to learn drawing-room manners. Although he was scarcely fifteen he was six feet high, and he did not in the least know what to do with his long arms and legs. His feet, too, were very much in the way, and he never realised before how huge his hands were or what a long distance of bare leg there was between his buckskin breeches and his shoes.

Abraham was certainly an awkward-looking boy, for his long legs were out of all proportion to his body, and his small head looked almost comical set on the top of such a tall maypole. People when they looked at him would smile and ask what he meant to be when he was a man.

"I am going to be President of the United States," he said with a chuckle, and everyone thought it a very good joke.

The tall ungainly boy, in his queer shabby clothes, living in the backwoods, willing to do the hardest work for the smallest pay, what would he ever have to do with the ruling of a great nation, or the fate of thousands of his countrymen? No wonder they thought it

a good joke, but the Fates, regardless as ever of the laughter of fools, went on weaving their web of human life, and little more than forty years afterwards the whole world was mourning the loss of Abraham Lincoln, the noblest President America had had since the days of Washington.

ALFRED TENNYSON

On the pleasant slopes of a Lincolnshire wold, there nestles the little village of Somersby, and here in the rectory, on a summer evening of 1809, Alfred Tennyson was born. Outside the moors were purple with heather, the woodbine peeped through the nursery window, the roses and lilies in the rectory garden, thick with buds and blossoms, whispered to each other in the summer breeze, the tall hollyhocks and sunflowers kept guard behind them, and the air was sweet with the scent of lavender. Down by the brook which ran at the foot of the field beyond the garden there were "brambley wildernesses," and "sweet forget-me-nots" spread like a sheet of blue. It seemed a fitting world to welcome the coming of a poet.

The baby that had just opened its eyes upon this flowery summer world was a very strong, sturdy boy.

"'Here's a leg for a babe of a week!' says the doctor; and he would be bound,
There was not his like that year in twenty parishes round."

He was only two days old when he was baptized by his father, Dr. Tennyson, the rector of Somersby, who gave him the name of Alfred, almost before the baby's eyes were accustomed to the light.

There were three older children in the rectory, and this new baby soon became the old one, for brothers

and sisters followed fast on each other's heels, until at last there were twelve of them, eight boys and four girls, like little steps and stairs one above another. It was just as well, perhaps, that the rectory was not a small one, so that the rector could write his sermons in peace, undisturbed in his library by the children's noise. Not that he was easily disturbed when once he was among his beloved books, for then he seemed to live in a world apart and forgot that the nursery and schoolroom were echoing with the sound of twelve little voices.

Later on, as the children grew older, they often found their way into their father's library, and he taught them to love his books, and showed them the way into a new world of delight.

How the children loved their home! There was the dining-room, with its stained-glass windows that threw coloured lights upon the walls where the sun shone, "Butterfly souls" as someone called them; there was the sunny drawing-room lined with bookshelves, its yellow-curtained windows looking out on to the smooth green lawn and gay garden beyond; there, too, was the cheerful bow-windowed nursery, but best of all they loved their mother's room. It was always a paradise to them, for to be with their beautiful mother meant having the best and merriest of times.

The children all took after their mother in their love for animals, and she taught them from their infancy to be kind and pitiful towards "all wounded things?" It was so well known in the village that Mrs. Tennyson could not bear to see an animal ill-treated, that it became a favourite plan of the boys to drag their dogs close to her window and then begin

to beat them, hoping that she would bribe them to leave off or even perhaps buy the dog to save it from ill-usage.

Perhaps of all the children it was Alfred who was most keen on watching the habits of birds and beasts and creeping things, and in the woods close by he was a continual trial to the gamekeepers. No sooner had they set a snare than "Master Alfred" would be sure to come along and spring it.

"If ever we catch that there young gentleman who is for ever springing the gins, we'll duck him in the pond," they wrathfully exclaimed.

The rectory children were all clever and fond of reading, and were never tired of making up stories and inventing new games. It was just the kind of family to play delightful games, for there were plenty of children to play them, but these special children possessed a special gift of inventing new plays, and that made it still more delightful.

There was the game of battles, when each side planted a willow wand upright in the ground for a king, and stuck firmer sticks around him for a guard. Then the enemy advanced with stones, which they hurled at the willow kings until one or other was laid low. There were mimic tournaments, and gallant defences of stone heaps which they pretended were ancient castles, and the boys were very fond of climbing on to the roof of an old farmhouse near their garden, and making believe they were watching for advancing invaders from the battlements.

But perhaps what they loved to do best of all was to write stories, and these they would sometimes hide under the vegetable dishes at dinner, and when dinner

was over bring them out and read them aloud. The stories were all wonderfully good, but there was no doubt that the boy who made the best stories and invented the most thrilling games was Alfred. Knights and ladies, wizards, enchantresses, dragons, demons, and witches came trooping forth at his word of command. He loved the sound of words and the musical rhythm of poetry, and even before he could read he had a way of stringing words together just for the sake of the music in them.

Running outside on a stormy day while yet still a baby, the wind tossing his dark hair and whistling in his ears, he would spread out his arms wide in delight and chant aloud: "I hear a voice that's speaking in the wind." Long afterwards he tells how the words "far, far away" always acted upon him like a charm. As he grew bigger his lines grew longer, and he had a song for everything he saw. He would begin:

> "When winds are east and violets blow,
> And slowly stalks the parson crow,"

making up hundreds of lines as he went along.

When Alfred was seven years old he had to decide whether he would go to sea or go to school. He loved the sea with all his heart, but then again he had an idea that school was a palace of delight, and so when the question was put, "Will you go to sea or to school?" he answered promptly, "To school."

Alas! the palace of delight soon proved to be but a dream, and the stern reality had no delight about it whatever. The master of the Louth Grammar School, to which he was sent, was one of the old-fashioned kind who believed in much flogging, and

of course there were boys ready to bully and ill-use all small new boys, and Alfred came in for his share.

The romance he had woven around the idea of school life very soon faded when he found himself sitting shivering with cold on the stone steps of the school-house, holding his poor aching little head, which had just been well punched to remind him that he was a new boy. It was not a pleasant thing to learn lessons when his head ached and his fingers were too frozen to hold a pen, and Alfred hated that school.

There was an old wall covered with wild weeds opposite the school windows, and the sight of the waving grasses and cushions of moss was like the friendly greeting of old friends to the lonely child, and this was the only pleasant memory that he carried away from school. How overjoyed he was when the happy day came for him to return to the rectory and do his lessons with his father! His father was stern perhaps, but lessons were a different thing with him. Years afterwards, when Tennyson was telling his own son about these lessons and how much he hated Horace because he was the author so "thoroughly drummed" into him, he went on to say sadly:

"And now they use *me* as a lesson-book at schools, and they will call me 'that horrible Tennyson.'"

It was good to leave the hated school and to be back at the rectory, in his own particular little attic-room, where from the window he could watch the stars and smell again the scent of the roses and lilies, and dream his dreams and make words into music. Flowers, birds, and beasts were all his friends, and he knew their ways and their language in a wonderful way. One night, leaning out of his attic window, he heard the cry of a

baby owl, and when he answered it, the tiny fluffy ball of feathers came flying in, and nestling close to him, ate its supper from his hand and after that took up its abode at the rectory.

Very often, too, at night he would steal out into the darkness through the garden where "the lilies and roses were all awake," out on to the moors, to watch the sheep with the shepherd, and to lie on the heather looking up at "the great star-patches" until the dawn came up.

Perhaps it was then that "the gleam" first floated dimly before his eyes, and the voice came which bade him follow the highest and do his best to ennoble the world with the gift which God had given him.

"Great the master
And sweet the magic;
In early summers
Over the mountain
On human faces
And all around me
Moving to melody
Floated the gleam."

So the boy lying there under the stars saw the vision and heard the message which was to rule his life.

WILLIAM MAKEPEACE THACKERAY

Looking back on the days of childhood, so much is wrapped in the mist of forgetfulness that it is often difficult to know what is fact and what is fancy. But here and there in most of our memories the mist is suddenly torn apart and some special thing stands out as clear and distinct as all the rest is dim and blurred.

Little William Makepeace Thackeray had but misty recollections of the first five years of his life spent in India. There was a confused remembrance of dark faces, a pleasant river, many servants to do his bidding, and a busy kindly father. Then from the midst of the shifting memories there sprang out clear and distinct a scene which he never forgot.

Two little boys were walking down a ghaut, or river stair, to where a boat was waiting to carry them to a big ship which would soon set sail for England. They had said good-bye to their mothers, and the mothers were left behind. That was the misery which tore away the kindly mist of forgetfulness which never again closed round the remembrance of that parting.

The two little boys who climbed down those steps were William Thackeray and his cousin Richmond Shakespeare.

William was five years old, and India was not a healthy place for children of that age. Five years ago,

in 1811, he had been born at Alipur, at the official residence of his father, who had held a high post in the Indian Civil Service, but who had died when his little son was only four years old. William did not remember his father, it was his young beautiful mother that he clung to with all the love of his childish heart.

Of course it was very exciting to live on a ship where everything was strange and new, and where he and his cousin could enjoy all kinds of adventures and games, but nothing made him forget that he had said good-bye to his mother, and that he was going further and further away from her. Other faces faded from his memory, but no mist of forgetfulness ever blotted out his mother's face.

However, days are long and time moves slowly when one is only five years old, and although William did not forget, he soon learned to be happy on board ship. The days were so much alike that nothing stood out very clearly in his memory until they reached the island of St. Helena, when his black servant took him ashore, and he went a long long walk across the island. The next thing he remembered was that they came to a garden, where a lonely man walked to and fro, his head bowed and one hand thrust into his bosom. The servant bade William look well at him.

"That is he," he whispered, "that is Bonaparte. He eats three sheep every day, and all the children he can lay hands on."

William shuddered. That must be an ogre indeed! It was enough to terrify any little boy, although the ogre really did not look so very large or fierce. Still, if he could eat three sheep and a child or two for dessert he must be a terrible ogre indeed, and William was not

at all sorry when the ship set sail and the island and the terror were left behind.

Poor ogre, walking there in his loneliness and despair! He had frightened half the world, and now in his prison garden he could still strike terror to the heart of one small boy.

Arrived in England, William was given over into the charge of his great-uncle, Peter Moore, of the Manse of Hadley, where there was quite a little colony of Thackeray relations. Everything was very grand and stately in his uncle's house, but it was very different when he went to stay with his mother's grandfather and aunt at Fareham in Hampshire. There everything was very simple, and yet William was as happy in one place as the other, and it was only when his school-days began that all the sunshine seemed to fade out of his life.

The small school to which he and his cousin Richmond were sent was supposed to be a very good one, and the parents in India were quite satisfied that it was all that they could wish, but the fact was the master was a "horrible tyrant," who made the children utterly wretched.

William was "a tender little thing, just put into short clothes" (that is to say, short jackets), and he felt the cold of the English winter bitterly, and still missed his mother and the sunshine of India. It was so very cold at school. His poor little fingers and toes ached with chilblains, and he was even cold inside, because he had so little to eat, and the kind of food was so nasty. Every night he knelt by the side of his bed—the bed that was so hard and uncomfortable—and, in trembling fear of being bullied and laughed at, he could only sob out a very short prayer. "Pray God I may dream of

my mother." But even if the dreams came, the next morning came too, so there was another long miserable day to be faced. "What a dreadful place that private school was; cold, chilblains, bad dinners, not enough victuals, and caning awful."

It was a happy day for William when he left that school, but the happiness did not last long, for his next school at Chiswick was almost as bad. Not that William ever dreamed of complaining, he accepted it all as inevitable, and his aunt could have known but little of his sufferings. It was by her dictation that he wrote to his mother in India to tell her how happy he was, because he had "so many good little boys to play with." Then having written and posted the glowing account of his happiness, William made up his mind that he could stand his misery no longer and that he would run away from school.

It was an easy matter to slip past the front door and through the fine iron gates of Walpole House, and William managed to run as far as the end of Chiswick Lane, but there the road to Hammersmith looked so wide and so frightening that his heart sank and he turned and ran back again. It was a lucky thing for him that he was able to slip back into his place before he was missed, or there would certainly have been an exhibition of "caning awful."

In after years Thackeray, in one of his great novels, draws a picture of this school of his and calls it "Miss Pinkerton's Academy" and describes the departure of one of the pupils and how she flings a copy of Johnson's Dictionary out of the carriage window and exclaims, "So much for the Dixonary. Thank God I'm out of Chiswick."

That most likely was exactly what Thackeray himself felt when he said good-bye to Walpole House, and at the age of ten and a half was entered as a scholar at Charterhouse.

Life looked much brighter then. His mother and his stepfather had come home from India, and that alone was enough to line every cloud with silver. Through all his life, Thackeray's love for his beautiful mother was so strong and filled his heart so entirely that for her sake he was always gentle and courteous to every woman, and it taught him, too, to have a special tenderness for children and all who were weak or helpless, or who needed a helping hand. It was like a golden thread running through all his life.

School was still a trial and a horror to him, but now there were always the holidays to look forward to, and so it was possible to endure. Every week he secretly took out the pocket-book which his mother had given him and marked off, from the calendar, another seven days from the black list that stretched itself out before "that blessed day," the reddest of red-letter days, when the holidays would begin.

Dr. Russell, the head-master of Charterhouse, was not the sort of man to help and encourage a sensitive and rather timid boy such as Thackeray was at ten years old. He was like a "hungry lion," and his roar alone struck terror to the hearts of the small boys when they were first presented to him at school.

It is always a dreadful experience to be a new boy, and Thackeray shook in his shoes when his turn came to be interviewed by the master.

"Take that boy and his box to the matron," thundered Dr. Russell in his most terrific voice, pointing at

Thackeray as if he were a criminal about to be executed, "and make my compliments to the junior master and tell him the boy knows nothing and will just do for the lowest form."

The poor little culprit slunk out after the janitor and felt this was not a very cheerful beginning at the new school, but he soon learnt to know that the head master's bark was worse than his bite, and that although he was stern and unsympathetic and "a beast," he was "a just beast."

The junior master in whose care he was placed at first did not help to make things more comfortable, and the boys at his house were obliged to rough it in many ways. There were fifty boys in the house, and they had all to wash "in a leaden trough, under a cistern, with lumps of fat, yellow soap floating about in the ice and water."

Thackeray never enjoyed his school-days. He did not shine either in games or in lessons, and he made but few friends, although he was a great favourite with those who really learned to know him. The lessons he was obliged to learn, especially Greek and Latin, he hated with all his heart.

"When I think of that Latin grammar," he writes in after years, "and of other things which I was made to learn in my youth, upon my conscience, I am surprised that we ever survived it. When we think of the boys who have been caned because they could not master that intolerable jargon! What a pitiful chorus those poor little creatures send up!" And then he adds, "I have the same recollection of Greek in youth that I have of castor oil."

At first when, through carelessness or backwardness,

Thackeray blundered in his lessons, it was torture to him to be held up to ridicule by the head-master, and he could only just manage to keep back the tears as the reproof was thundered out.

"Your idleness is incorrigible, and your stupidity beyond example. You are a disgrace to your school and to your family, and I have no doubt will prove so in after life to your country," roared the "hungry lion." "A boy, sir, who does not learn his Greek play, cheats the parent who spends money for his education. A boy who cheats his parent is not very far from robbing or forging upon his neighbour. A man who forges on his neighbour pays the penalty of his crime on the gallows. And it is not such a one that I pity (for he will be deservedly cut off), but his maddened and heart-broken parents, who are driven to a premature grave by his crimes, or if they live, drag on a wretched and dishonoured old age. Go on, sir, and I warn you that the very next mistake you make shall subject you to the punishment of the rod."

But erelong all these terrible threats fell flat, and Thackeray went his own way undisturbed by thoughts of future disgrace.

"I was not a brilliant boy at school," he tells us; "the only prize I ever remember to have got was in a kind of lottery in which I was obliged to subscribe with seventeen other competitors, and of which the prize was a flogging. That I won. But I don't think I carried off any other. Possibly from laziness, or if you please from incapacity, but I certainly was rather inclined to be on the side of the dunces."

Thackeray was always rather inclined to be on the side of the dunces. They were such pleasant com-

panions, and so much more desirable than the learned prigs who could "turn off Latin hexameters by the yard and construe Greek quite glibly." He was quite sure that in the long run the dunces never turned out to be half such dull men as the prigs.

Now although Thackeray called himself a dunce and hated his lessons, there was nothing he cared for so much as books, only the books must be the ones he chose for himself and not lesson-books.

He had as great an appetite for story-books, especially those full of "fighting, escaping, robbing and receiving," as he had for the raspberry open jam-tarts which were the most delicious delicacy on earth to the Charterhouse boys. In and out of school hours he had always a book handy. He was whipped and he learned his lessons, but neither whippings nor lessons did him much good. It was from the books which he read with such delight that he learned most of what was worth knowing. *Kenilworth*, *Waverley*, the *Pirate*, all the magical stories of the Wizard of the North were the real teachers of Thackeray, and it has been said that Sir Walter Scott and not Dr. Russell was his head-master.

The desk in front of him would be piled up with large, serious-looking books, Latin and Greek and dictionaries, and it would seem as if he were studying diligently. "Yes, but behind the great books which he pretends to read, there is a little one with pictures, which he is really reading. He, of course, is so much engrossed that he does not notice one of the masters stealing up behind and looking over his shoulder, with a book in each hand, and the first thing he knows is that his head is laid against one book and smacked

with the other, to teach him not to study the Waverley Novels in lesson-time."

With the exception of Horace, Thackeray never came to love any of the Greek or Latin authors, but he delighted in Fielding, Steele, Goldsmith, and Sterne.

The other boys looked askance at him at first, for they rather mistrusted anyone who loved reading, but when they found out that the stories he read were the kind of tales that could be told over again in the dormitories at night, they began to regard him with respect. He could also draw most delightful caricatures, and that helped to make him still more popular.

Like most schoolboys, Thackeray was fond of "tuck" and had an extremely healthy appetite for unwholesome dainties. Of pasty "I have often eaten half-a-crown's worth (including, I trust, ginger-beer) at our school pastry-cook's," he tells us.

But money was not always plentiful, and once he spent a most miserable term all for the want of three and sixpence. He had bought a pencil-case from a companion (a young Shylock of the school), hoping to pay for it out of some expected tips, but the tips never came, and the debt hung like a millstone about his neck. The owner of the pencil dunned him for the money from May till August, when the holidays began, and then Thackeray most thankfully paid him out of the five shillings which his tutor gave him to pay expenses on his homeward journey. That only left him one and six, but his tutor had also entrusted to his care one pound five shillings which he was to carry home to his parents, the last school account having been overpaid.

The coach started for Tunbridge Wells from Fleet Street at seven o'clock in the morning, and Thackeray was so afraid of being too late that he arrived at six, without having had any breakfast.

One shilling had gone to pay his cab, and the last sixpence he had bestowed on the porter, so he had not a penny of his own to spend, and he began to be exceedingly hungry. A schoolfellow was enjoying a delicious-looking breakfast in the inn coffee-room, but Thackeray sat outside growing more and more hungry every minute. There was, of course, the one pound five shillings which had been entrusted to his care, but he was quite sure it would be most dishonest to touch that.

Presently, as he gazed mournfully around, his eyes caught sight of a placard hanging in a little shop-window close by, on which was printed, "Coffee two-pence, round of buttered toast twopence."

Hunger suggested that fourpence was a very small sum to appropriate, and the voice of hunger was so loud that it quite drowned the voice of conscience, which scarce spoke above a whisper when it murmured that the money was not his to spend.

That cup of coffee, "muddy and not sweet enough," and that round of toast, "rancid and not buttered enough," was the most delicious breakfast Thackeray had ever eaten, but when every crumb and all the coffee-grounds were finished and hunger was satisfied, conscience began to make itself most disagreeable.

All the way home Thackeray could think of nothing but that fourpence which he had had no right to spend. Every milestone he passed (milestones which he had always before greeted with such wild delight on his

way home) were like fingers of reproof pointing at him. The moment he arrived and saw his parents he began at once to confess.

"Bless the boy, how hungry he must be," was all his mother said; and his stepfather told him cheerily that he ought to have gone in and had a proper breakfast at the inn. They laughed together over the boy's distress and the fatal fourpence, but the story shows us what an upright, conscientious boy young Thackeray was.

Perhaps it was the remembrance of such times, when tips were scarce, that made Thackeray afterwards so fond of tipping every boy he knew. He never saw a boy without wanting to tip him, and when people shook their heads and said it was unwise, he had no patience with them.

"It is all very well, my dear sir, to say that boys contract habits of expecting tips from their parents' friends, that they become avaricious and so forth. Avaricious! fudge! Boys contract habits of tart and toffee eating which they do not carry into after life. . . . No, if you have any little friends at school, out with your half-crowns, my friend, and impart to those little ones the fleeting joys of their age."

So the days at Charterhouse went by and Thackeray began to leave his childhood behind him. He carried away little love for his school-days at Charterhouse, but without the remembrance of those days he could never have written some of the best chapters of his immortal novels. It was the hours spent there with his beloved story-books which made him long to write stories himself, and his great ambition was to write a book which boys would enjoy.

"If the gods would give me the desire of my heart

I should be able to write a story which boys would relish for the next few dozen centuries," he said.

We all build our castles in the air, and have our great ambitions, but only to a very few do the gods grant the fulfilment of a wish, such as was granted to William Makepeace Thackeray.

CHARLES DICKENS

On the 7th of February, in the year 1812, there was a baby born in a comfortable little house at Landport, on the coast of Hampshire. Outside the sea was wailing its winter dirge, and inside the baby was crying as babies usually do when the world is very new to them, whether it be winter or summer. And all this happened, too, on a Friday night.

Now everyone knows that Friday is considered rather an unlucky day on which to be born. "Friday's child is full of woe," so the rhyme goes, and the old nurse, who held the crying baby in her arms, shook her head over him and thought it a pity he should begin life at such an unlucky time. She did not know that this baby was born with a magic gift, a gift that was to make the old dull world forget its woes for a while and laugh aloud with pure joy and delight, so that it could never be quite such a dull old world again. Little Charles Dickens was indeed a "Friday's child," but so full was his heart of the joy of life, the magic of happiness, that with his wonderful gift he turned whatever he touched from despair into hope, from dull greyness into the sunshine of joy and laughter.

But all this, of course, happened later on. Just at first the small baby was very much like any ordinary baby, beginning its little life with a mournful wail.

"I was born (as I have been informed and believe)

on a Friday, at twelve o'clock at night. It was remarked that the clock began to strike and I began to cry simultaneously." So wrote Charles Dickens long afterwards in one of his books called *David Copperfield*, a great part of which is said to be the story of his own life.

John Dickens was the name of the baby's father, and he was a clerk in the Navy Pay Office, earning enough money to keep things comfortable in the little house at Portsea. He had married Elizabeth Barrow, and a little daughter, Fanny, had been born two years before the arrival of Charles upon the scene. There, in the garden before the house, the two children used to play together as soon as Charles was able to toddle by himself.

Little children have often a way of noticing things very closely, which seems quite wonderful. Perhaps it is that they do not look at too many things at once, and so remember very distinctly what they do notice. Charles was certainly one of these noticing children, and he had besides a wonderful memory. When he was a man he described exactly the little garden in which he had trotted about, holding Fanny's hand and grasping the slice of bread and butter in his other little chubby fist. How well he remembered, too, those dreadful fowls that looked so tall and fierce as they scuttled past him. There was the cock, almost as tall as himself, that crowed with such vengeance that it made him shiver, and the geese that came waddling after him, stretching their long necks and making him dream at nights that he was being chased by hungry lions. He saw them all as clearly as he had seen them with his baby eyes.

But the home which the little boy remembered best, and where he spent the happiest days of his childhood, was at Chatham. Close at hand was the dockyard with its wonderful ships, its delicious smell of tar, its mysterious ropes and the queer old sailors ready to talk to the eager little boy who was so keen on all things connected with the sea. Those old seafaring men found their way afterwards into many of his stories, and when touched with his magic wand they have lived on for ever.

Not far from Chatham, on the high road, was an old house called Gadshill which had a great fascination for Charles. When he was a very little boy his father took him to see it, and told him that if he worked hard and was very persevering he might some day live in that very house or one quite as handsome. Charles never forgot his father's words, and as soon as he was old enough to walk there by himself he would steal away and sit gazing at the old house, dreaming dreams and making up pictures as he looked. Although he was only a little boy he had read parts of Shakespeare's plays, and knew that this was the place where old Falstaff went out to rob the travellers, and that made it all the more interesting. It was a very "queer small boy" who used to sit there dreaming those very large splendid dreams of what he would do in the future, but they were dreams which some day became real and solid.

Charles was not a strong child and was rather small for his age. He never was very good at games, even at marbles or peg-top, but he was fond of watching the other boys, and while they played he always had a book in his hand, for he was never tired of reading.

Perhaps, if he had been stronger and able to play like other boys, he would have read less and watched less, but then how many things we would have missed later on when he began to write his stories. His eyes were so keen even then that he looked at and pondered over everything, and never forgot the smallest details.

It was his mother who taught him to read, and later on she began to teach him Latin too. In *David Copperfield* he says, "I can faintly remember learning the alphabet at her knee. To this day, when I look upon the fat black letters in the primer, the puzzling novelty of their shapes and the easy good-nature of O and Q and S, seem to present themselves again before me as they used to do."

Here again is an account of the high-backed pew in church at morning service, where as a little boy he was warned not to let his eyes wander but to look at the clergyman. "But I can't always look at him—I know him without that white thing on, and I am afraid of his wondering why I stare so, and perhaps stopping the service to inquire—and what am I to do? It's a dreadful thing to gape, but I must do something. I look at my mother, she pretends not to see me. I look at a boy in the aisle, and he makes faces at me. I look at the sunlight coming in at the open door through the porch, and there I see a stray sheep half making up his mind to come into the church. I feel if I looked at him any longer, I might be tempted to say something out loud; and what would become of me then! . . . I look from Mr. Chillip, in his Sunday neckcloth, to the pulpit, and think what a good place it would be to play in, and what a castle it would make with another boy coming up the stairs to attack it, and

having the velvet cushion with the tassels thrown down on his head. In time my eyes gradually shut up; and from seeming to hear the clergyman singing a drowsy song in the heat I hear nothing until I fall off the seat with a crash, and am taken out more dead than alive."

Later on, in the same book, Dickens describes his little store of books. "My father had left a small collection of books in a little room upstairs to which I had access (for it adjoined my own) and which nobody else in our house ever troubled. From that blessed little room *Roderick Random*, *Peregrine Pickle*, *Humphry Clinker*, *Tom Jones*, the *Vicar of Wakefield*, *Don Quixote* and *Robinson Crusoe* came out, a glorious host to keep me company. They kept alive my fancy, and my hope of something beyond that place and time —they and the *Arabian Nights* and *Tales of the Genii*—and did me no harm."

The books were not mere stories to him, they were real life, and he knew the people that lived between the covers of these books better than those he met in the everyday world.

There is a wonderful country called the Land of Make-Believe, which most children know well, but which few grown-up people ever enter. It is so easy to reach that you can arrive there in a second, and yet when you are once inside its borders, the everyday commonplace old world seems thousands of miles away.

Little Charles had found the key to the entrance gate of that land when he found those old books, and no child ever enjoyed the delights of Make-Believe Land more than he did. Just think what a difference it made to him! Here was a little boy who looked

very much like other little boys, whose jacket was often dusty and hair untidy, whose ears were sometimes boxed with the Latin grammar when he did not know his lessons, and who had a curious habit of carrying about the centre-piece of an old set of boot-trees. That was what the commonplace people in the every-day world saw. How different it all was in the Make-Believe World. This was no little boy, but a tall hearty captain of the Royal British Navy, wearing no dusty jacket, but a splendid spotless uniform. The curious weapon in his hand had nothing to do with an old set of boot-trees, it was a terrific life-preserver which kept at bay a swarm of bloodthirsty savages that dogged the noble captain's footsteps. No boxing of ears could hurt the captain's dignity, for such insults are unknown in Make-Believe Land.

As children grow up it becomes more and more difficult for them to find the way to Make-Believe Land, and even when they sometimes reach the very gates they are obliged to turn back sadly, for they have lost the key. But this never happened to Charles Dickens. He never forgot the way to that delightful land, he never lost that Golden Key.

The next step after reading so many books was, of course, the desire to write one himself, and so Charles began a very grand tragedy entitled *Mismar, the Sultan of India.* People began to think this very queer small boy was extremely clever, and to find that he could amuse and entertain them too. Not only could he write stories but he could tell them as well, and he had a quaint way of singing little comic songs that was quite delightful.

His father was fond of showing him off, and often

in the evenings, when he ought to have been in bed, he was sitting in his little chair, lifted on to the table, singing and amusing the assembled company.

It was not very good for him, but little Charles enjoyed it all amazingly, and these were the happiest years of all his childhood, especially when he and his sister Fanny were sent to school. For, unlike most little boys, Charles loved school and loved lessons. He wanted to learn everything. He had made up his mind that he was going to be a great and successful man. The master soon noticed how quick and bright the boy was, and took a great fancy to him, helping him even out of school hours, so that he got on very quickly.

He was a handsome little boy at that time, with long curly fair hair and keen bright eyes. He was very good-tempered and amusing too, and his schoolfellows were all fond of him, for, although he was clever he was not a prig, but loved all kinds of fun and mischief as much as any of them. And what stories he could tell them, too!

Then suddenly, when Charles was only eleven years old, the sunshine seemed to fade out of his life and a grey mist of misfortune descended on the family. His father was never a good business man, and had begun to owe more money than he could pay back. Instead of living in the pleasant house at Chatham, the family now moved to a small lodging in a poor part of London, where everything seemed to Charles most wretched and mean.

There was no more talk of schooling now. Charles spent his time running errands, cleaning boots, and trying to make himself generally useful. He could not understand the change at all, and he was very miserable.

He did long so eagerly to learn many things, he had built such splendid castles in the air of the great things he meant to do, and now suddenly all the castles came tumbling down and he was only a little, bewildered, shabby boy, learning nothing, and with no one to teach him anything. He would have given anything in the world if only he could have gone back to school.

But there are other ways of learning besides having lesson-books and going to school, and although Charles did not know it, he was learning many things in the London streets which no lesson-books could have taught him. The same habit of looking at people and noticing everything was as keen in London as it had been in the Chatham dockyard. The look of the streets, the faces of the poor people he saw, their ways and conversation were all stored up carefully in his mind, and afterwards with his magic touch he made them all alive and real again for us, with a reality that makes them live for ever. Indeed this world would have been a much duller place for many people had not Charles Dickens learned those odd lessons in the queer by-streets and out-of-the-way corners of London life.

In those days, anyone who owed money and could not pay it was put into what was called the Debtors' Prison, and before very long Charles's father was taken there, and the family fortunes went from bad to worse.

There were now several little brothers and sisters besides Fanny, who was just then the only successful member of the family, having been elected a pupil of the Royal Academy of Music. It was but a sad little household at No. 4 Gower Street, and money grew scarcer every day. Charles began to carry off his father's books to sell, and after that the furniture went

piece by piece to the pawnshop, until there was nothing left but a few chairs, the beds, and a table. Then it was that some work was found for Charles to do.

In the early days at Chatham, Charles had been very fond of one of his relations, a young man called James Lamert. This youth had always been kind to the little boy, taking him to the theatre, and even making a little miniature theatre for him to play with. James Lamert was now a manager of a blacking manufactory, and he offered to take Charles into the warehouse, and give him six shillings a week. The offer was thankfully accepted, and the boy was set to work.

But what unsuitable work it was for the poor child, and how he hated it! He was a delicate little lad, easily hurt in mind and body, and he shrank from the rough companions and ugly sights and sounds amongst which he now lived. It was indeed a miserable time, and Charles Dickens never, all his life, forgot the misery and unhappiness he suffered there. He had so longed to go to school and to learn more and more, and now all that he knew was slipping away and he was becoming a hopeless, ignorant little drudge. The place, too, was full of horrors for him, as he describes it in one of his books. "It was a crazy old house with a wharf of its own, abutting on the water when the tide was in, and on the wind when the tide was out, and literally overrun with rats. Its panelled rooms, discoloured with the dirt of a hundred years, I dare say; its decaying floors and staircase; the squeaking and scuffling of the old grey rats down in the cellars, and the dirt and rottenness of the place; are things, not of many years ago in my mind, but of the present time."

Here Charles Dickens worked, at first in a little

recess off the counting-house, but before long in the common workroom with the other boys. Each boy had his little table, with rows and rows of pots of blacking-paste ready to be covered, first with oil-paper and then with a little blue cap. The blue cover had then to be tied round with string and the edges neatly trimmed and the label stuck on. All day long, and every day, there they sat, covering and pasting and snipping away at those endless rows of little blacking-pots.

And yet in spite of all his unhappiness and dislike of the work, Charles set his mind to it, and tried to do it as well as he possibly could, and he learned to do it as quickly and as thoroughly as any of the other boys.

It was a strange life for a child to lead. His home was now broken up and the whole family had gone to live in rooms in the Debtors' Prison. Charles was boarded out with an old woman, who took children in as lodgers, and who he afterwards described as "an ill-favoured, ill-conditioned old lady, of a stooping figure, with a mottled face, like bad marble, a hook nose, and a hard grey eye that looked as if it might have been hammered at an anvil without sustaining any injury. . . . She was a great manager of children, and the secret of her management was to give them everything that they didn't like, and nothing they did—which was found to sweeten their dispositions very much."

Charles was still such a little boy that he could not know very well how to manage to live on his six shillings a week. Sometimes he was tempted to spend his money, which should have been kept to buy his dinner, on stale pastry and then he had to go without any dinner at all, and very often he had nothing to eat

but a slice of pudding heavy and flabby, with great fat raisins in it, stuck in whole at wide distances apart.

But in spite of the daily drudgery, the lonely, pinching life, and the rough companionships, no real bitterness seemed to creep into the boy's nature. His wonderful sense of humour lifted him over many a rough place, and the kindness and tenderness of his heart taught him to find something good and kindly in those around him. And all the time his keen eyes were always watching, his active brain, always half unconsciously, was noting things that happened around him, and which he never afterwards forgot. Then after a while brighter days began to dawn. The father of the family managed to pay his debts and was able to leave the Debtors' Prison, and Charles was set free from his prison too. The blacking factory knew him no more. Once more his hopes began to rise, once more he was to have a chance of winning his way in the world. He could scarcely believe his good fortune, it seemed so much too good to be true, but he actually found himself at school again and could begin to learn all that he longed to know. So Charles thought he would now begin to climb the ladder that was to lead him to fame and greatness, but he did not know that he had already mounted many a step, that the grey dreary life had been a wonderful school for him, and the lessons he had learned there would be useful to him all his life. The magic wand was there ready to touch the world and charm it at will from tears to laughter, but some of its most potent spells would never have been laid upon us but for those childish days of want and hardship, when he was learning his lessons from the book of life.

ROBERT BROWNING

It was in the month of May, when the pear tree in the garden was white with blossom, when the wise thrush was singing his song twice over, and the white-throat and the swallows were building their nests, that the poet Robert Browning was born.

Camberwell then, in the year 1812, was still a country place, for London was quite three miles away, and the house where the poet was born had its garden gay with flowers, its fruit trees and strawberry beds, all untouched by the London smoke.

So it was a very pleasant flowery world upon which the baby first opened his eyes, and it was a world full of music, too, for the nightingale and the thrush sang outside the window in the garden where the pear tree scattered its blossoms and dewdrops upon the clover field beyond.

The little yellow-haired baby was rather a disturber of the peace in that quiet country home. His book-loving father and his gentle mother were not accustomed to anyone so full of life and energy, or one who possessed so passionate a temper. It was certainly his grandfather's temper over again which Robert showed so early, and his grandfather's temper was one before which everyone quailed.

As soon as the baby could speak he began to clamour for "something to do," and he was never

happy until he was given some live thing to play with. From the very beginning of his childhood Robert loved everything that was alive.

What was to be done when the baby refused to take his "nasty medicine"? In vain his mother pleaded and reasoned and promised punishment. It was no use. No, he was not going to take it unless—and a gleam of hope shone through the stormy skies.

"Unless what?" asked his mother anxiously.

"Unless you give me a speckled frog," answered the young tyrant calmly, and feeling quite sure that the speckled frog would soon be forthcoming, he made up a rhyme on the spot to suit the occasion.

> "Good people all, who wish to see
> A boy take physic, look at me."

Meanwhile his patient mother might have been seen through the window searching carefully among the strawberry beds for that speckled frog, and never resting until she had found one.

She had a great deal of sympathy for her little son's desire, for she too loved all living things, and understood them in a way that was most wonderful. She might almost have had some of the old magic nature of the woodland fawn in her, for not only birds and animals came to her at her call, but she lured even the butterflies about her as she walked in the garden.

The love of animals, of flowers and of music, were all inherited from his gentle mother, by the boy who possessed his grandfather's temper. To hear his mother play was a pleasure almost too keen for the child, and when she went to the piano in the twilight, and the sound reached him as he lay half asleep in his

little bed, it was like the call of the magic piper of Hamelin. Out of bed he climbed, and with bare feet pattering on the floor, the little figure in its nightgown crept closer and closer to the music, never making a sound, and listening entranced until the music stopped. Then, like a little whirlwind, he threw himself into his mother's arms and clasped her tightly round her neck, whispering "Play, play," between his sobs.

So, too, his mother's love of flowers was shared by her eager little son, and the days they spent together in the garden were very happy ones. Flowers to him were almost like living friends, coming only second to his beloved pets.

There was quite a small menagerie in the garden, collected at various times by Robert and his mother, beginning, perhaps, with the speckled frog. There was a monkey and an eagle, owls and magpies, hedgehogs and snakes, and any "poor thing" that needed a home. The boy had a very tender heart where animals were concerned. Stray cats were carried tenderly home, and even insects were carefully treated, and great was his delight in winter when he could warm a frozen lady-bird back to life. Even in story-books he could not bear to hear of the death of any animal, and he shed many bitter tears over the end of his favourites.

At two years old little Robert was "a wonder at drawing," as he was about many other things, and as the Dulwich Gallery had just been opened and was only "a green half-hour's walk across the fields," he early learned to know the pictures there. Books and pictures were what his father loved best, and Robert quickly learnt to love them too.

Long before he could read, the child began to make

up verses and string long rhymes together, and he would stand by the dining-room table and recite while he beat time with his hands on the table's edge, which was about on a level with his small nose. By the time he was five he could read and write easily, and began to work on his first "composition." Now he began to feel sure that those rhymes and verses were rather foolish, and it was time to set to work on something more serious. So the "composition" was quite a different thing. He tried to make it something like the scraps of Ossian he had read, and when it was finished he felt it to be a fine piece of work indeed and worth being preserved, so for the sake of future generations he laid it carefully under the cushion of a big arm-chair.

His book-loving father was very proud of Robert's cleverness, and the boy was allowed to live in the library as much as he liked and to read any book he fancied. And what a golden store of knowledge the boy gathered from those books. Books about history, about the lives of great men, about art and music, they all were eagerly read and never forgotten by that wonderful boy.

That was his real education, for school did but little for him and he hated it with all his heart. Rules and restraints were like a heavy chain to him, making him feel like a prisoner, and when at eight years old he was sent as a weekly boarder to the Rev. Thomas Ready's school at Peckham, he considered it "undiluted misery."

The Misses Ready were kind, good ladies who looked after and taught the younger children, and poor little Robert, who already knew almost all Pope's *Homer*

by heart, was obliged to listen to Watts' hymns while he had his hair brushed and oiled once a week, by one of the kind ladies.

Later on when he passed into the master's hands he was no happier, for he had no great respect for Mr. Ready's learning. He was sure his father knew a great deal more than his schoolmaster, just as his father's books were so infinitely superior to any that could be found in the master's library. The bigger boys bullied him, and all the restraints of school chafed and tried his temper more and more. His only happy times were when he was at home looking after his beloved animals, riding his pony, reading in his father's library, or climbing up to the top of Camberwell hill.

Those long lonely rambles were perhaps his greatest joys, after all. Up there on the hill, lying flat on the grass under the trees, he was free to think his long long thoughts, free to make friends with the birds that came shyly hopping nearer and nearer as he wooed them, free to watch for hours each tiny insect, each springing blade of grass and budding leaf, free to notice, mark, and remember every detail of nature's handiwork.

It was afterwards, when the boy had grown into the man, that the poet gave to the world that "abundant music" which filled his soul, but it was now, during his childhood, that the music was stored, note by note. Some he gathered from the wisdom in his father's books, some strain he caught when gazing at the pictures in the gallery he so loved, many melodies he learned from Mother Earth as he lay so close to her upon the long grass, guessing her secrets and listening

to her voice, but the golden store grew day by day, as he lived and learned and looked.

"Overhead the tree tops meet,
Flowers and grass spring 'neath one's feet;
There was naught above me, and naught below
My childhood had not learned to know."

DAVID LIVINGSTONE

THE old world goes on its way, so full of sorrows and so full of sin, that the pages of her history make often but sorrowful reading. So many of her sons there are who strive only for riches and renown, who trample down the weak and helpless or use them as stepping-stones to achieve their end, and it seems as if selfishness and cruelty were everywhere triumphant. But here and there a name stands out upon the dark page, the name of a hero writ in shining gold, and the story of his life seems to lift poor human nature out of the dust and makes it once more possible to believe that we are the sons of God.

Like stars in a dark sky those names shine out, and there are none that shine with a steadier, purer radiance than the name of David Livingstone.

At the sound of that name a figure stands before us as lifelike and as real as if he had lived but yesterday. It is the figure of a man tall, strong, and powerful, with keen fearless eyes, and the background is the dark continent of Africa where he laboured to bring deliverance to the captive and carried the light of God's truth into the Valley of the Shadow of Death.

This splendid figure with his splendid plan, his knowledge and dauntless courage, we watch him as he pushes his way through pathless jungles where the foot of a white man had never trod, fighting with lions and

wild beasts, fighting a more strenuous fight yet with disease and death, strong of arm and strong of brain, with a heart as tender and compassionate as a woman's. From what great family, we ask, did this hero spring, what splendid chances went to the making of this man?

A little grey village in Scotland, as poor and commonplace as the lives of the hard-working people who lived there beside the cotton-spinning factories. This was the birthplace of David Livingstone. A boyhood of toil and hardship, a daily fight with poverty, a struggle to obtain books and learning, these were the difficulties of which the boy made stepping-stones to reach the goal, aided by no brilliant chances of birth, riches, or education.

In one of the narrow alleys of the village of Blantyre in Lanarkshire there lived, about a hundred years ago, a poor hard-working family called Livingstone. The father, Neil Livingstone, was an upright industrious man, rather stern perhaps, but with a kindly heart beneath the sternness, and with good, brave Highland blood in his veins. His grandfather had fought many a battle for Bonnie Prince Charlie, and at last at Culloden had laid down his life for his king. That was a story which the children were never tired of hearing, although their mother would shake her head over the tale, and tell how her grandfather fought on the other side. She, too, could tell many stories of the deeds of her grandfather, who had lived in those cruel, terrible times when the Covenanters were hunted down like wild beasts, driven from their homes to take refuge in caves, and imprisoned or put to death for conscience' sake.

The mother's blue-grey eyes shone as she talked of those days, and although she was so small and delicate,

it was easy to see that the spirit of the Covenanters still dwelt within her and that she would have fearlessly faced death for what she believed to be the right. There was never a more loyal and loving soul than that which dwelt in this humble Scotch mother, and her clear dark eyes were like windows out of which "her love came beaming freely like the light of the sun."

It was a hard life and a difficult one which the mother had to face. The money Neil Livingstone earned by selling tea was little enough, and there were five children to feed and clothe, besides the two little mounds in the churchyard which left such an ache in the mother's heart.

It was on the 19th of March 1813 that David was born, just when the last wreaths of snow were melting behind the dykes, and the first signs of spring had begun to cheer the land after the long, dour winter days. He was a strong healthy child, as hardy as his Highland forefathers, and with his gentle mother's beautiful grey-blue eyes and a great deal of her tender, loving nature.

There was plenty of work in the home for even small hands to do, and as soon as David was old enough to go to the village school he had begun to be quite a help to his mother. She was very particular about keeping the house neat and tidy and spotlessly clean, and she taught David to be thorough in all his work. When he swept the room for her there was no leaving of dust in dark corners where it might not be noticed, no dusting round in circles and not underneath. David learned to be as careful and tidy as she was herself, and did his work most cheerfully, only asking that the door might be kept shut while he was sweeping out the

room, so that the other village boys might not see him doing housework.

Neil Livingstone was very strict with his children, and his word was law in the house. Whenever he made a rule they all knew it must be obeyed, and that nothing would excuse disobedience. One of his rules was that every night at dusk the cottage door was locked for the night, and the children were all expected to be home by that time.

Now it happened that one night David was so much interested in his games that he never noticed that the sun had gone down, and when he raced home in the gloaming, it was to find the door shut and barred as usual, while he was left outside. He looked blankly at the closed door for a few minutes, but never dreamed of knocking or kicking. His father's rules were like the laws of the Medes and Persians, and there was nothing to do but to make the best of it. A kind neighbour, seeing him standing there supperless, gave him a slice of bread, and David sat down on the doorstep, ate his supper, and then curled himself up to sleep. Of course his mother, missing the child, when it grew late, came anxiously to the door to look out, and found him quite prepared to spend the night there, and of course his father, smiling rather grimly, said, "Bring the bairn in."

By the time David was ten years old he was considered big enough to begin to earn his own living and do something towards helping the rest of the family. A place was found for him at the cotton-spinning mill, his days at the village school came to an end, and he began to work like a man.

Every morning he had his porridge at five o'clock,

buttoned his jacket tightly, pulled on his bonnet, and set out in the pitch darkness or faint grey light of dawn to walk to the factory, where work began at six o'clock. He was what was called a "piecer," and his work was to watch the looms and tie together the threads which broke in the weaving.

It was not very exciting work, but it was extremely tiring and, except for a break for meals, it went on until eight o'clock at night, which meant working almost fourteen hours a day.

But if David found it hard at first, when Saturday came, and he was paid his first earnings, he was as happy as a king. He held the half-crown tight in his fist, having carefully planned beforehand what he meant to do with it, and then he started for the village shop, where he had seen an old Latin grammar for sale. He had set his heart on that grammar, and it did not cost a great deal, so when he had it safe under his arm he ran all the way home, and bursting into the room, threw his earnings into his mother's lap. It was quite the proudest day in his life.

The old Latin grammar helped to lighten many a dull hour at his work now. He propped it up on the top of the spinning-frame, and as he went backwards and forwards he learned little pieces of it by heart, until he became a fairly good Latin scholar.

It might have been supposed that after fourteen hours at the factory David would have been glad to rest or play when he got home at night, but instead of that he was off at once to the night-school, and even when he returned at ten o'clock he would still sit up poring over his beloved books, until his mother came and blew out the candle and bade him be off to bed.

All the children loved books, and they had always been encouraged by their father to read as much as possible. Neil Livingstone himself collected all the books he could, and was specially fond of stories of travel and missionary work. Whenever there was a missionary meeting held within walking distance he was always there, and he took David with him whenever he could. Those long days of work in the factory, the hours spent in the night-school and the poring over books till midnight might make one think that David was merely a studious, hard-working boy, but whenever a holiday came round he showed what a splendid out-of-door boy he was as well. Away on the moors, scrambling over rocks, climbing hills, wading the river, he was in his element, and what David did not know about plants and beetles, birds and butterflies, was not considered worth knowing by the other boys. If he was keen on his books he was just as keen on making collections, hunting for plants, and gathering together all kinds of out-of-door knowledge. Nothing escaped his eye.

He was keen, too, on games, and knew all the best pools for fishing, so that once he actually caught a salmon. It was forbidden by law to land a salmon, but David could not bring himself to be a law-abiding citizen that time. It seemed a shame to throw the great glittering fish into the water again, and yet it was almost impossible to carry it home without being seen. His brother Charlie was with him, and together they considered the matter, with the result that David slipped the salmon down the leg of Charlie's trousers and then marched him home.

"Puir bairn, he's got an arfu swollen leg," said the neighbours pityingly as they passed, and David

managed to keep his face becomingly solemn until they reached home. There was no doubt that David was the greatest favourite with all his brothers and sisters. The whole house was merrier when David was at home, and he could tell such splendid stories and was always ready to play games with the little ones.

All this time there was something else David was learning besides his factory work and his night-school lessons, and that was to be honest and straightforward and truthful in word and deed. He had been early taught to fear God, but as he grew older something more powerful than fear began to take hold of his heart. The more he thought of our Lord's wonderful life on earth, the more his heart was filled with a great admiration and a great love, and a longing to follow in His footsteps even afar off.

It was the thought of that going forth to seek and to save that which was lost, to help the helpless and the weak, that made the boy's heart burn within him. That tender healing of body as well as soul, the carrying of light into dark places, made his heart throb with a great hero-worship, and slowly, day by day, he began to weave his plan of service for his Master, while he watched the weaving of the thread in the loom and joined the broken pieces together.

There were far-off lands still in darkness, waiting for the light. There were helpless men, women, and little children stretching out their hands and calling for aid, souls and bodies, as of old, waiting to be healed.

He was only a poor factory boy dreaming his great dream of service, longing to try to follow the example of the Great Physician, making up his mind steadfastly

to do his best, however poor that best might be; yet there in the little grey village of the North, hedged in on every side with difficulties, he manfully set his face towards the good, and never once did he turn back.

And what was the good towards which he strove so earnestly? It was not the love and admiration of his fellow-countrymen, not a name that should be famous all the world over, nor the honoured rest beneath the Abbey roof which shelters England's heroes. All these were to be his indeed, but it was a higher reward he sought, even the sound of his Master's voice, saying once again, "Well done, good and faithful servant."

RICHARD WAGNER

It was in the merry month of May, in the year 1813, that the great musician Richard Wagner was born. The room in which he first made his voice heard was on the second floor of the Red and White Lion, in the old town of Leipzig, where there was plenty of other noises in the busy street outside to drown the sound of his feeble wailing. Two days later he was carried to S. Thomas' Church, where he received the name of Wilhelm Richard.

Richard's father was a clerk in the police service at Leipzig, but he was a student too, and loved all kinds of literature and poetry, and was especially fond of the theatre. Many of his friends were actors, and when, soon after Richard's birth, he died and left a widow and seven children, it was one of these actor friends, a man named Ludwig Geyer, who took charge of the family, married the widow, and became a kind and loving stepfather to the children.

From the very first it was baby Richard who was his stepfather's favourite, and he made up his mind that the child should have the best possible education and turn out a credit to the family. He was anxious that all the children should do well, but his hopes were set on Richard. It was no easy matter to provide for a family of seven children, so Ludwig Geyer was thankful when he was given a post in the theatre at

Dresden and could comfortably settle there with his large family.

Richard was only two years old when he left Leipzig, so the very first thing he could remember was the Dresden theatre and his kind stepfather carrying him about the stage. The theatre was like a mysterious magic world to him, whether he saw it from the stage box or whether he wandered amongst the actors and peeped half fearfully into the wardrobe, where wigs and false noses and curious costumes were lurking ready to spring out at him. Sometimes, too, he took part in the performances, and that made him feel very important indeed.

There was one special occasion when a performance was given for the King of Saxony, and to Richard's great joy he was allowed to act the part of an angel.

He was sewn up in tights, and wings were fastened to his shoulders, and although he had nothing to do but to pose gracefully, he gave his whole mind seriously to the task. He was not at all surprised, therefore, when the performance was over he was told that the King had sent him a big iced cake as a token of his approval. He felt he had quite deserved it.

Sometimes there were a few words to be spoken in the little parts which Richard took, and that provided a good excuse for leaving his lessons unlearned.

"I had a most important part to learn," he would say solemnly to his teacher, while all the other little boys and girls listened enviously.

However, by the time Richard was six years old his stepfather thought it was time to begin lessons in earnest, and sent him to a clergyman's house, not far

from Dresden, to be taught there with several other little boys.

So the magic world of the theatre was closed for Richard, but other things began at once to interest him. He enjoyed playing games, and books were discovered to possess all kinds of new joys. There was the exciting adventures of Robinson Crusoe, a biography of Mozart, besides the real accounts in the newspapers of the Greek War of Independence. That war fired all Richard's imagination, and he wanted to hear all about the Greeks, and he listened entranced to the old stories of Greek mythology.

Scarcely a year had passed in the country parsonage when again a change came into Richard's life. A messenger arrived post-haste from Dresden to fetch Richard home, as his stepfather was dying and wanted to see him.

The boy set off at once on foot to walk the three miles into Dresden, and when he arrived, very tired and very frightened, he could scarcely understand why his mother was crying and why his father should look so strangely ill. They bade him play his little piece of music on the piano in the next room to see if it would interest the dying man, and as he stumbled over the notes his stepfather listened and said, "Is it possible he may have musical talent?" He had always been so anxious to discover some special talent in the boy.

Early next morning the children were told that their kind stepfather was dead, and had sent each one a message and his blessing.

"He hoped to make something of you," said the weeping mother to Richard, and it seemed as if now that hope was dead too.

Soon after that the good schoolmaster arrived and took Richard back to the old parsonage, but he did not stay there long. His stepfather's brother undertook to look after the widow and children, and he arranged that Richard should live with him at Eisleben, where he carried on his business as a goldsmith.

Richard was accustomed to changes by this time, and it felt almost like a new fairy tale to live in the old house in the market-place of Eisleben, the little town so full of memories of Martin Luther. Not that Richard cared much about Luther. His fairy time was made up of all the strange sights and sounds of the busy market-place and the wonderful music of the band of the hussars which were quartered near at hand.

There was no saying what strange and delightful sights might meet the eye when one looked out on to that market-place. Sometimes there was even a circus or a troupe of acrobats, and once there was a tight-rope stretched from tower to tower across the square, on which a man walked as easily as if he was on solid earth.

Richard felt certain then, that to walk on a tight-rope was the most splendid achievement in all the world, and he set himself earnestly to learn how to do it. He made a rope of twisted cords and stretched it across the courtyard, and in a very short time, in spite of many falls and bruises, he succeeded in walking across with the help of a balancing-pole. But he grew tired of being an acrobat erelong, and turned once more to the joy of that wonderful music which was more magic than anything else. One special piece he was never tired of hearing, "The Huntsmen's Chorus,"

out of the *Freischütz*. Why, he must have often seen in Dresden the great composer Weber, who had made this magic music! It was something to dream about.

But besides the strange sights and haunting music of the outside world, life was very interesting inside as well. In a little dark room overlooking a narrow court-yard, the old stepgrandmother lived, and Richard used to love to creep quietly into the room and watch her as she sat among her birds. In and out of the window the robins fluttered, hopping fearlessly upon her chair and fluttering about the green boughs which she kept always fresh for them by the side of the china stove. Sometimes, alas! a cat would find its way in and carry off one of the friendly robins, but Richard always managed to catch others for the old woman to tame, and she was so pleased with him that she adopted him as well as the birds, and kept him tidy and clean.

School did not fit in very well with the rest of the fairy-tale life, and Richard had many a tussle with the town-boys who mocked at his "square cap," but out of school hours there were always adventures to be sought for in the country round about and along the river bank, which was like an enchanted world to him.

Then suddenly the fairy tale came to a cruel end. Eisleben, the acrobats, the brass band, the old grandmother and her birds all faded away, and Richard's life was changed once more, and he was sent off to Leipzig to visit his father's relations the Wagners. He was only eight years old, but he had seen so many changes that he was quite ready for anything that might happen next.

And here was a change indeed! His uncle Adolph

and aunt Friederike Wagner lived in a very large and stately mansion, quite unlike the old house in the market-place of Eisleben. It was a house that had belonged to the Electoral family of Saxony since the days of Augustus the Strong, and in one of its splendid apartments a bed was prepared for the small guest in a royal fashion.

It was delightful to live in a room hung with silken curtains and filled with beautiful furniture, but it possessed one great drawback for Richard. He could not bear to look at the rows of portraits that hung upon the walls. The painted faces were exactly like a row of ghosts watching him, and when he was left alone with them they seemed to come to life and step down from their frames and crowd around him. He tried to shut his eyes, but they terrified him almost out of his wits, although they were not terrifying portraits at all, but gentle ladies in hooped petticoats, with charming faces and powdered hair. Nevertheless when he crept into the great state bed, and his aunt carried away the candle, he lay shaking with terror until sleep came and mercifully chased the ghosts away.

In spite of those haunting pictures, Richard was sorry when his visit to Leipzig came to an end and another change brought him back to his family home at Dresden. All his brothers and sisters had been getting on well in the world, and Rosalie, his eldest sister, had such a good engagement at the Dresden theatre that she was able to support the whole family and keep things comfortable. Another sister was an actress as well, and one of the brothers had also gone on the stage, but their mother wished they had found something different to do. She had no liking for the

theatre, and she was firmly determined that her youngest boy should have nothing to do with it. She was keenly anxious that Richard should turn out well, and now that she had him at home again she watched anxiously to see in what direction his talents lay.

It was rather difficult to decide what was to be made of the boy, but as he was only just eight years old it was clearly necessary to send him to school, where it was to be hoped he would show some signs of cleverness.

So to the Kreuz grammar school at Dresden Richard went, but alas, for his mother's hopes! He was immediately placed in the lowest class, and began his school career there as a dunce.

Before long, however, it was discovered that Richard could be quick and clever enough when his interest was aroused. Anything he wanted to learn he learned quickly; he was only dull and inattentive when he was set to learn things he disliked, such as arithmetic and grammar. Anything strange or mysterious, anything with a story about it immediately interested him, and because he loved the Greek myths he set to work to learn Greek, that he might the better imagine how his beloved heroes spoke to each other. Grammar was always a tiresome obstacle, and he wished with all his heart that he could learn a language without it, but even grammar could be mastered if he made up his mind to it.

So time went on, and still his mother watched for some sign of special talent, and at last she thought her hopes were to be realised.

The head-master of the grammar school had ordered the boys to write a poem in memory of the sad death

of one of their companions, and had promised that if any of the verses should be considered good enough he would have them published. Richard immediately set to work and wrote his set of verses, which he showed to one of the masters, and after the poem was "cleared of extravagances" it was sent in.

The verses were declared to be the best that had been written. The head-master decided that they were worthy of being printed, and Richard suddenly found himself famous.

"He is destined to be a poet," declared his mother, as she folded her hands in thankfulness.

But she rejoiced too soon! Richard soon tired of making verses, and won no more laurels. He was a rather idle but very happy schoolboy, fond of fun and mischief, and eager for any kind of adventure. What was the use of trying to be a poet?

The old pictures at Leipzig were not the only things that filled Richard's fancy with ghostly terrors. All his life he had been haunted by uncanny fancies wherever he went. Whenever he was left alone in a room and he began to fix his attention on any particular piece of furniture, it always seemed to become alive and to twist itself into horrible shapes on purpose to frighten him. Scarcely a night passed that he did not wake up screaming over some dreadful dream, and though he was whipped and punished for disturbing the household, neither whipping nor punishment seemed to have any effect in curing him. Indeed he was so thankful to hear a human voice that he welcomed punishment gladly. None of his brothers or sisters would sleep near him, and the more he was left alone the louder he screamed.

Music had always been associated with Richard's ghosts, and the sound of a violin had from his babyhood filled him half with terror and half with a curious kind of delight. He had never forgotten "The Huntsmen's Chorus" which he had heard the band play in the market-place of Eisleben, and now he began to long to be able to play it for himself.

Weber, the composer of the *Freischütz*, patted the boy kindly on the head one day and asked if he wanted to become a musician, but Richard's mother answered for him. "He has never shown any signs of musical talent," she said sadly, which was quite true.

Richard loved to hear music but had never taken the trouble to make it for himself. Now, however, he was fired with the desire to play the overture to *Freischütz*, which charmed him by its mysterious feeling of ghostliness.

Without any help at all he set to work to pick out the notes on the piano, and before long managed to play the piece in his "own peculiar way." Seeing this, his mother when he was twelve years old engaged a master to give him regular music lessons, and he soon learned to play whatever piece of music he particularly fancied.

Now, too, he began to be interested in learning all he could about music and the great composers.

"Who was Beethoven?" he asked his sisters, and the story of the great master, deaf to his own wonderful music, thrilled the boy with keenest sympathy. At night, instead of ghosts he dreamed of the great composers, met them and talked to them, and often woke up sobbing with excitement.

At last he knew what he wanted to do. He would

compose music. Of course he had once made up his mind to be a tight-rope dancer, but that was when he was seven. His mother had arranged that he should be a poet, but then he had only been nine years old. Now that he was thirteen he knew his own mind, and he meant to set himself seriously to work to be a great composer.

"I hoped to make something of the boy," his step-father had said sorrowfully when he lay dying. But Richard had needed no making. The genius was there ready to unfold itself all in good time, and to thrill the world with wild sweet music, music full of the strange fancies and ghostly terrors which haunted little Richard in his childhood's days.

JEAN-FRANÇOIS MILLET

Among the great geniuses of the world we would write in golden letters the name of Jean-François Millet, adding, still with the golden pencil, the words "peasant and painter."

All know the painter from his wonderful pictures, almost every child has seen at least a copy of his "Gleaners" or "The Angelus," but the peasant is not so well known, and the story of his childhood is the key to much of the beauty which lies hidden in the great painter's work.

Listen then to the story of the childhood of Jean-François Millet, peasant and painter.

On the coast of Normandy, high up on one of those frowning granite cliffs which overhang the sea, the little town of Gruchy is perched like a sea-bird's nest among the grey rocks. It has one long straggling street leading downwards to the shore, for here the cliffs have parted to fold in their cleft a little green valley, where the sheep can be led out to find pasture, and a possible path be found to the beach, where the harvest of seaweed is gathered and drawn up to enrich the fields above.

Looking outwards to the sea, through a vista of frowning rocks, there is a gloomy grandeur about the view in front of the town which seems to hold only sad memories of storm and shipwreck, danger and death;

but on the other side are pleasant green fields and sunny orchards, which give a homely, happy air of peaceful content to the place where the hard-working people of Gruchy earn their daily bread.

In one of the strongly-built, well-thatched houses of the little town there lived, about a hundred years ago, a peasant farmer called Jean-Louis Millet. Like his father and grandfather before him, he worked in the fields all day and returned at night to the same comfortable old house which was large enough to shelter the three generations which now gathered under its roof. There was the grandmother, who looked after the household and took care of the children, there was Jean-Louis himself, his wife and eight children. The mothers of Gruchy had little time to look after their children, for, like the men, they were busy at work in the fields all day, and so it was in the house of Jean-Louis Millet that the old grandmother was left in charge of the children and had most to do with their bringing up. She loved them all and cared tenderly for each one of them, but it was the eldest boy she loved best of all. It was in her arms the boy had first been laid, and she it was who carried him to the little grey church and gave him the name of Jean-François; Jean after his father, and François after the saint of Assisi, who is the special protector of those who know poverty and who, working under the open sky, learn to know and love God's creatures and all the wonderful works of His hands.

The stories of saints were all well known to the old grandmother, and indeed she followed not afar off in their footsteps, living her honest, simple, upright life, and teaching little François to see God's hand in all the

wonderful things around him, the golden glory of the gorse, the purple of the heather among the grey rocks, the mighty cliffs, the thundering waves that broke on the shore, as well as the piping notes of his "little sisters the birds." And she taught him, too, to dread a wrong action more than death.

"Wake up, my little François," she would say in the early mornings, bending over his bed and waking him gently. "Thou knowest not how long the birds have been singing the glory of God."

There was another inmate of the old house who had a special love for the boy, and that was his great-uncle the Abbé Charles Millet, a priest who suffered much persecution at the time of the Revolution, but who was now the parish priest of Gruchy. It was a thrilling tale which François was never tired of hearing, how when the soldiers were hunting him down, this great-uncle had contrived a hiding-place close to his bed, and when the soldiers came unexpectedly one day, he had only just time to disappear before they burst in. The bed he had been sleeping in was still warm, and this the soldiers noticed at once.

"Yes, yes, he is here!" they cried, "the bed is still warm."

But search as they might they could find no other trace of him, although he heard every word they were saying, and knew in his hiding-place that they were turning the house upside down in their search.

This old man was no idler, and he worked as hard as any other labourer in the fields, stowing away his breviary in his pocket and tucking up his cassock before he set to work. Wherever he went little François trotted

by his side, for the old man could not bear the child out of his sight and was never tired of teaching and training him.

There was one day which François never forgot. He had wandered away from his uncle and had climbed down to the sea-shore, and was enjoying all the delights of fishing for tadpoles when he heard his name called and saw his great-uncle furiously waving to him from the cliff. He obeyed the call at once and climbed up, but the old man had been badly frightened, and as soon as he had the child safe and sound by his side again, his anxiety suddenly turned to anger. He took off his large three-cornered hat and beat François with it soundly and then drove him up to the house, still beating him with the hat as he went.

"Ah! I'll help thee to get home," he cried with each flapping whack, and as François's legs were short and fat they did not carry him very swiftly, and he spent some painful moments before he reached home.

After that François always regarded the three-cornered hat with distrust, for, as he said years afterwards, "I was not of an age to understand a tenderness which showed itself by blows from a hat."

This great-uncle died when François was only seven, but by that time the boy was learning his lessons at school, which he had entered with flying colours some months before. He was a big boy for his age and strongly built, and had been already taught his lessons at home, so that the elder children were rather proud of him when they took him for the first time to school. They boasted themselves of his strength and cleverness, and declared that he would be able to beat any boy of

his own age or even older. So of course the first thing they did was to arrange a fight.

There was no boy quite so young as François in the school, but they picked out one a little older, the strongest and most promising they could find, and proceeded to arrange the quarrel. A chip of wood was laid on one boy's shoulder and the other was told, "I bet you don't dare knock that chip off."

Of course no one but a coward could refuse, and equally of course the other boy could not endure such an insult, so as soon as the chip was knocked off the battle began. In this fight François covered himself with glory, to the pride and delight of his supporters, who declared joyfully, "Millet is only six and a half, and he has beaten a boy more than seven years old."

But when it came to lessons François was not quite such a success. He never could learn things by heart, and he was hopelessly dull at sums. Then, too, he had a bad habit of drawing capital letters in his copy-book when he ought to have been learning his lessons, and yet when asked any question he always answered well and sensibly. He was twelve years old when he went to church at Gréville to be confirmed, and the priest there was so much impressed by his intelligent answers that he asked him if he would like to be taught Latin.

"With Latin, my boy," said the priest, "you can become a priest or a doctor."

"No," said François, "I don't wish to be either; I wish to stay with my parents."

"Come all the same," said the priest, "you will learn."

So François learned to read the Bible and Virgil in Latin, and read them over and over again until he

knew each word. But there was little time now to give to books, for he was old enough to help his father in the fields, and it was time he learnt to mow the grass, make hay, bind the sheaves, thresh and winnow, plough and sow.

So the father and son worked together at the daily common tasks of the ordinary labourer, but they saw in their work things which few ordinary labourers see. They both loved everything that was beautiful either in form or colour, and nothing to them was commonplace. Years before, when François was a little boy, trotting along by his father's side, his father would stoop and pick a blade of grass and bid his little son look at it.

"See," he said, "how fine that is."

Or he would point to some tree they were passing and say, "Look at that tree, how large and beautiful it is, as beautiful as a flower."

One day they had stood together on the cliffs to watch the sunset, and the wonderful pageant of the crimson sky, and the golden glory of the shining sea made François exclaim with delight. But his father stood still and reverently bared his head. "My son, it is God," he said, and François never forgot those words.

It was not until some years afterwards that the boy began to try and draw pictures of the things he loved to look at, and it was the old engravings in the Bible that suggested the idea. He had little time for anything but the farm work, and he was quite content to do that thoroughly, to drive his furrow straight and clean, to work with a will in the fields he loved. But at the noonday rest, when the other workers lay sleeping, he took his pencil and made careful drawings of all that he saw from the window, the garden, the trees, and the

rocks, and later on the figures he had seen at work or walking down the village street. The wonder and terror of the sea, the tall poplars round the grey church tower, the bent forms of old men, the women at their work, all these things filled his head, and the longing to draw them began to fill his heart.

So it was that Jean-François, the peasant, brought all the wealth of his heart, his love of God and of nature, to the making of Millet the painter, and it was from the golden mine in the heart of the peasant that the painter drew all that was best and most beautiful in his art.

CHARLOTTE BRONTË AND HER SISTERS

The February winds were blowing across the Yorkshire hills and sweeping down the steep street of the little village of Haworth, as the heavily-laden carts piled with the furniture of the "new parson" came slowly up towards the parsonage. Above the street the moors rose higher and higher towards the round hills beyond, and there was scarcely a tree or hedge for the mad winds to wrestle with, as they swept the snow into long drifts by the side of the grey dykes and passed disdainfully over the stunted shrubs that struggled to hold their own on the bleak hillside. At the top of the steep village street the church, with its square tower, stood out clear against the moor and sky, and sheltering beside it was the low stone parsonage with its strip of garden, shut in on both sides by the silent churchyard.

There was curiosity astir in the village that day, for the new parson and his family were expected to arrive and several people were looking out of their doors and windows as the carts came slowly on, the horses' feet slipping and stumbling over the roughly-paved flagstones. Not that any of the villagers meant to show any interest or had the least intention of welcoming the new comers. The people of the West Riding were not given to welcoming strangers, and were certainly no

respecters of persons. They were a rough independent folk, inclined to mind their own business and to expect other people to mind theirs, while they looked with a good deal of suspicion on any unknown thing or person. Their manners and appearance were as rugged as the wild country around, but there were good loyal hearts hidden away under the rough exterior, and kindly ways were there too.

Slowly the carts were dragged upwards by the tired horses until, in front of the church, they turned aside into a narrow alley and drew up at the gate of the parsonage. The new parson, Patrick Brontë, was bringing his wife and six little children to make their home there in the hillside village on the edge of the moors, and this was the first sign of their arrival.

Patrick Brontë was an Irishman, tall, strong, and handsome, quite a contrast to his small delicate wife, who looked almost too fragile to face the strong moorland breezes. The six children were as delicate-looking as their mother, and were like little rungs of a ladder, beginning highest up with Maria, who was six years old, and ending with Baby Anne, who was scarcely to be counted by years as yet. The children had all been born at Thornton, in Bradford parish, except the two elder girls, Maria and Elizabeth. Charlotte, following fast upon the heels of Elizabeth, was born on the 21st of April 1816, and then followed in quick succession Patrick, Emily, and Anne.

It was after little Anne was born that the mother's health began to fail, and when the family arrived at Haworth it was plainly seen that she had not very long to live. It had been no easy task to look after and clothe and care for those six little ones, especially when

money was not too plentiful. Now it had grown to be a task quite beyond her strength.

From the very first there was a shadow over the parsonage, and the children, young as they were, felt it in their strange old-fashioned way. They were wonderfully good, quiet children, never the least inclined to be noisy or troublesome, and with their mother ill they grew even quieter. Maria, feeling the heavy responsibility of being the eldest, and bearing the weight of seven years, was like a little mother to the younger ones and easily kept them in order. She was very small for her age, but she was her mother's right hand, and had long ago learned to be useful in the nursery and in household concerns. Their father was not particularly fond of children and was always afraid they would trouble their mother, so Maria kept them all out of sight as much as possible, and they were as quiet as little mice.

"You would not have known there was a child in the house," said one of the old servants, "they were such still, noiseless, good little creatures."

The parsonage was not very large, but there was a small spare room above the front door, which was called "the children's study," although the eldest student was scarcely seven years old. Here Maria kept the little ones amused, and when it was fine took them out for walks over the moors. That heathery moorland was the great delight of the children's hearts, and they would wander out hand in hand, a solemn little procession of six, the elder ones carefully helping those toddlers whose steps were still somewhat unsteady.

After one year at the Haworth parsonage the invalid mother died, and the lonely children grew even quieter

and more lonely. Their father saw but little of them, for he had even his meals by himself, but he laid down strict rules that they should be brought up to be hardy and not think too much of clothes or food. It was not difficult to keep that rule, for there were very few luxuries in the parsonage.

Mrs. Brontë had been too ill to make friends with anyone within reach of Haworth, so there was no one now to take an interest in the children, but before very long an elderly aunt came from Cornwall to live with them and take charge of the household. The children, however, clung to one another and were quite content to be left alone. They seemed to need no one if they could only be together, and they lived entirely apart in a world of their own, making their own pleasures and interests.

Books were scarce, and Maria had begun early to read the newspapers and to tell the younger ones any news which she thought was suited to their understanding. There was always a great deal to be read about the Duke of Wellington; he was Charlotte's special hero, and any news about him was eagerly discussed. As soon as the children could read and write they made up little plays and acted them together, the characters usually being the Duke of Wellington, Napoleon, Hannibal, or Cæsar. Sometimes serious disputes arose as to which was the greatest hero, and as it was seldom that there was any disturbance in "the children's study," their father strode upstairs at once to see what was the matter and to settle the dispute.

He wondered sometimes what these children were really like, and what thoughts they had in their minds, and one day he hit on a curious plan of examining

them. He was quite sure if their faces were hidden they would answer more freely and without any shyness, so he got an old mask which was in the house, and each child was told in turn to hide behind it and answer out boldly.

He began with little four-year-old Anne.

"What does a child like you want most?" he inquired.

The childish treble from behind the mask answered promptly, "Age and experience."

Emily came next.

"What should be done with your brother when he is a naughty boy?" was the question.

"Reason with him, and when he won't listen to reason, whip him," was the firm answer.

When Charlotte's turn came she was asked which was the best book in the world, and the answer came unhesitatingly, "The Bible."

"What is the next best book?" asked her father.

"The book of nature," answered the sedate little student.

Maria, then ten years old, was asked what was the best way of spending time. "By laying it out for a happy eternity," answered the anxious-minded little sister-mother who had wasted very little of her time on childish pleasures.

It was no wonder that the father felt rather puzzled and thought that somehow they were unlike other children.

It was just about that time, when Maria was ten years old, that it was decided to send the two elder girls to a school which had been started for poor clergymen's daughters at Cowan Bridge. Maria and Elizabeth were

the first to be sent off into this new unknown world of school, but a few months later Charlotte and Emily joined their sisters there.

It was a sad change for the children. Home-sick and wretched, the four little girls went through a most miserable time. It was not at all a suitable school for such delicate children, and the hardships and misery were almost more than they could bear. In winter-time it was specially hard, and even the strongest and most healthy children suffered greatly.

The getting-up bell rang long before it was light, and the poor little shivering mortals had to huddle on their clothes, brown stuff frocks and long holland pinafores, by candle-light, very often unable to wash at all, as the water in the basins was frozen hard. Hair had all to be brushed very flat and very straight back from the face, and there was no excuse made for chapped and chilblained hands if everything was not as neatly arranged as possible. Then came prayers, and there were lessons too, to be done before it was time for breakfast.

The hungry shivering little sisters found it difficult to eat the food provided for them, not because it was simple, but because it was so badly cooked and unclean, and often they went without their breakfast of burnt porridge and had nothing to eat until dinner-time.

But worst of all, perhaps, were the long walks in the bitter cold winds, when chilblains made every step painful, and the grey frieze cloaks were not half thick enough to keep out the piercing cold.

It was Maria who first began to show signs of failing health, and when at last her father was sent for, and he came to take her home, it was too late. She died a few

days after reaching the parsonage, and before the summer was over the next little girl, Elizabeth, was also laid to rest in the old grey churchyard which had always seemed part of the children's home.

Charlotte and Emily were still left to endure the school life for some months longer, but it was considered advisable that they should not face another winter there, and so to their great joy they were allowed to come home and take up again the old dreamy, peaceful life with Patrick and Anne. The heathery moors were like old friends welcoming them back, and brought comfort to their sore little hearts as they wandered out again hand in hand, only four now instead of six.

Although Charlotte was not much older than the rest, she at once became the responsible elder sister, trying as best she could to fill Maria's place. Much too anxious-minded and old for her nine years, she was, like Martha, "careful and troubled about many things," and seemed to have left childhood far behind her.

All the children's regular lessons were now done with their aunt, but they learned a great deal more from their father's conversation out of lesson hours. He had a habit of talking over all kinds of public news that interested him, and the children listened eagerly, for they loved politics and any kind of out-of-the-way information. For the rest they were well cared for by Tabby, the elderly maid, who ruled them most strictly but really loved them devotedly, and took a great deal of trouble to give them any little treat she could provide.

So the next few years were perhaps the happiest the children had known, and they began once more to

invent their own pleasures and interests, and to write out their "original compositions" together.

Pennies were never very plentiful at the parsonage, and the children were obliged to be careful about writing-paper, so the stories were written, mostly by Charlotte, in the smallest possible handwriting, to take up the smallest possible space; handwriting which it is now almost impossible to read without a magnifying glass. These sheets, stitched together and put into covers of stout sugar-paper, formed quite a little library of at least a hundred volumes, containing tales, romances, poems, dramas, historical novels, and all kinds of adventures.

The Duke of Wellington, still Charlotte's hero, figured largely in these books, and everything of interest was carefully noted by one or other of the children, although it was Charlotte who did the greater part of the "compositions." The quiet lonely life and the hours spent on the moors studying "the back of nature" were apt to make Charlotte somewhat dreamy and romantic, but there was plenty of "the daily round, the common task," to keep her practical and energetic too. Besides her lessons she had to dust the rooms, help with the cooking, look after the younger ones and sew diligently under the stern eye of her aunt, but in spite of everything she always found time to write out those beloved little books. She was small for her age, very slight and fragile, with soft thick brown hair and rather a plain little face, adorned, however, with a pair of wonderful reddish-brown eyes. When anything interested her greatly it seemed as if a lamp was lit behind those eyes, and her whole soul suddenly shone out. There was nothing merry or childlike about her, for she

was a solemn small maiden much weighed down by her responsibilities, and her neat tidy ways and quiet manners, added to her rather quaint dress, might well have been described by those who knew her as "old-fashioned."

Five years of this peaceful life in the old parsonage passed by, and then, when Charlotte was fourteen, she was once more sent away to school, but to a very different kind of school this time.

There were only ten pupils at Roe Head, Dewsbury, and the mistress, Miss Wooler, was so kind and motherly that it seemed more like a large family than a school, and Charlotte need not have dreaded beginning her school life again. Long afterwards, one of the pupils wrote a description of her arrival in these words:

"I first saw her coming out of a covered cart, in very old-fashioned clothes, and looking very cold and miserable. She was coming to school at Miss Wooler's. When she appeared in the schoolroom her dress was changed, but just as old. She looked a little old woman, so short-sighted that she always appeared to be seeking something, and moving her head from side to side to catch a sight of it. She was very shy and nervous, and spoke with a strong Irish accent. When a book was given her, she dropped her head over it till her nose nearly touched it, and when she was told to hold her head up, up went the book after it, still close to her nose, so that it was not possible to help laughing."

At first Charlotte was desperately home-sick, and she did not seem at all to fit in with the other girls. The lessons she should have known she knew but little about, and all the curious knowledge she possessed on other subjects only made the odd-looking girl seem all

the more odd to her companions. She did not care for games, for she did not know how to play them, and was quite content to stand alone under the trees in the garden, where she could watch the sky through the branches and dream her dreams while the others played. She was extremely fond of drawing, and every picture that came her way she studied so long and so carefully that the other girls would begin to tease her and ask impatiently what it was she saw in it.

Then, if Charlotte was inclined to talk and explain what she was looking at, the girls began to discover that it was well worth while to listen to what the odd-looking little girl had to say. By degrees she became a great favourite with them, and whenever they wanted a story it was Charlotte who was always called upon to tell it.

It was at bedtime, perhaps, that those tales of Charlotte's were particularly in demand, for her stories always sounded specially thrilling in the dark. Indeed one evening they were thrilled overmuch by one of these tales, and frightened almost out of their wits, so that someone screamed out loud and brought Miss Wooler to see what could possibly be the matter.

The little girls of the old parsonage and wild moorland had a wonderful power within them. Those schoolgirls shivering in their beds, as they listened to the quiet voice that held them spellbound in the darkness, felt the strange fascination of the little story-teller, just as afterwards the world stopped to listen, and listening fell also under the spell of the genius of the sisters of Haworth parsonage.

JOHN RUSKIN

At the window of a small brick house in London a child looked out with intent solemn eyes, watching the water-carts as they drew up to be filled from the wonderful post in front. He was rather a lonely little boy, very fond of watching things silently for long times together, and the swishing and gurgling of the water, the wriggling of the serpent-like pipes, was a constant and exciting joy to him. There was no one to play with in the nursery, for this little boy was an only child, and neither his mother nor his Scotch nurse ever thought of playing with him. And there were no wonderful toys waiting to be played with either.

"John must amuse himself," said his mother, and so no toys were allowed. Only at first, when he was quite a baby, he had a bunch of keys to play with, because they made a pleasant jangling sound, and he was too young then to amuse himself properly. He had wanted one day to amuse himself with the tea-urn when his nurse Ann carried him into the dining-room at tea-time. Perhaps he was rather tired of that bunch of keys and thought the shining urn much more exciting, and liked the bubbling sound of boiling water. So with a crow of delight he put out his tiny finger to touch it.

"Keep your fingers back," said his mother quickly.

But John had a will of his own, and only stretched his finger out further towards the toy he wanted.

Ann turned to carry him away out of reach of danger, but his mother stopped her.

"Let him touch it, Nurse," she said.

So Ann stood within reach of the urn and John triumphantly put his soft little pink finger on its shining side.

"That," he tells us many years afterwards, "was the first piece of liberty I got, and the last which for some time I asked for."

John soon learned many things which were useful to know. If he tumbled on the stairs he was whipped, and that taught him to walk carefully. If he cried he was whipped again, and that taught him to be a good quiet child, and if he did not do as he was told there was another whipping, so it was little wonder that John grew up a steady, quiet, obedient boy.

As he grew a little older he was allowed to have a ball and a cart and bricks, but he never dreamed of wanting the toys he saw in the shop windows. He knew they were not for him.

Now John had an aunt who was determined that he should have something more exciting to play with than a bunch of keys or even a ball, and so on his birthday she brought him a Punch and Judy show. It was a splendid present. Punch and Judy were as big as real ones, all gaily dressed in scarlet and gold, and when the kind aunt tied them to a leg of a chair she made them dance as if they were alive.

But they did not dance long for little John. As soon as the aunt left, Punch and Judy also disappeared, and John's mother told him it was best that he should not have them.

It might seem as if Mrs. Ruskin was rather unkind

to her little boy, but she was really the kindest and most loving mother that any child ever had. She was so anxious that John should grow up good and wise and healthy, that she was determined not to spoil him. She was sure that children should be seen and not heard, and so until he had learned to be quiet and helpful he was not even allowed to come in to dessert to crack nuts for other people to eat. She was quite sure, too, that sweets were bad for children, and she never allowed John to have any dainties, although once when she was giving out stores in the store-room, and John was trotting silently by her side, she could not resist putting three raisins into his hand as a special treat. There was a certain evening, too, which John always remembered, when his father was dining alone and left a little of his custard which John was allowed to finish, tasting custard for the first time.

But there were happier and busier times for John than watching from his London nursery window the filling of water-carts, for when summer came round, the travelling-chariot drove up to the door, and father, mother, child and nurse set out on a journey to Scotland. First of all the luggage was piled in, under the direction of Ann, then the folding steps were let down and the passengers climbed into their seats, while Ann was perched up in the dickey behind.

What joy it was to John to sit there on the little box which contained his clothes, between his father and mother, where he could see everything as they galloped along, watch the horses brought out at the inns, and pretend he was a postboy himself, with a cushion for a saddle and his father's legs to whip instead of a horse.

Then when at last the Border country was reached,

and the Tweed like a silver ribbon lay winding its way by, and it seemed like the Promised Land to John, while Ann always repeated her favourite verse :

> "For Scotland, my darling, lies full in my view,
> With her barefooted lassies, and mountains so blue."

Erelong the travelling-chariot arrived at Perth, where at Rose Terrace another aunt lived, and here happy days and golden hours awaited John.

There was his little cousin Jessie ready to play with him, a garden full of delicious gooseberry-bushes sloping down to the Tay, and the river itself "a treasure of flowing diamonds," to be watched and wondered at. There was no need for toys here, and there were no lessons to cloud these sunny days. Only on Sundays came a scriptural examination which John and Jessie both enjoyed, as they always took higher places than any of the elder cousins, and were as proud as two little peacocks. But Sundays had always been days of sore trial to John. All his best story-books were taken from him that day, and although in church he was allowed to hold his mother's golden vinaigrette, it did not serve to wile away the dreary hour of the sermon, and he found the bottom of the pew but a dull place to sit quiet in.

John's mother had made up her mind long ago that her little son was some day to be a clergyman, and so he was taken very early to church, and even began quite soon to preach sermons himself. Piling up the red sofa-cushions in front of him for a pulpit, he began, "People, be good," and the sermon delighted his mother's heart.

Not only on Sundays but every day John learned

chapter after chapter of the Bible, and read it verse by verse every day.

It all seemed a toil and a weariness perhaps to the child, especially when at five years of age he learned to repeat the whole of the 119th Psalm, but it trained his ear early in rhythm, and afterwards, when an old man, he says that this Bible teaching was "the most precious, the one essential part of all my education."

But Sundays in Perth were lightened by having Jessie for a playfellow, even although there was cold mutton for dinner and they were strictly kept in order by the old Scottish servant. They were not even allowed the joy of jumping off their favourite box upon the Sabbath day, and John felt extremely rebellious until Jessie soothed him.

"Never mind, John," she said, "when we're married we'll jump off boxes all day long if we like."

Returning home again in the chariot after the blissful summer months, it was no wonder that for John the very thought of blue mountains meant a vision of happy days, so when his portrait was painted and he was asked what he would like to have in the distance of his picture, he answered promptly, "Blue hills."

When John was four years old there came a pleasant change in his life, for his father bought a house at Herne Hill, and this house had a delightful garden. There were lilacs in it and laburnums, apple, pear, and cherry trees, gooseberry bushes to rival the ones in the Perth garden, and best of all an almond tree.

To John this was a perfect Garden of Eden. The only two differences he knew of were that here all fruit, instead of only one, was forbidden, and that there were no animals to play with, which made him long all

the more to play with the lions' cubs in Wombwell's menagerie.

Here John grew up, learning to read in his own way without any help, and very soon beginning to write his own stories too, for his head was full of the wonderful tales which his father read aloud in the evenings. John had a little recess in the drawing-room which was his special domain, and there he sat and listened to Sir Walter Scott's novels, or wrote stories of his own, and then drank his cup of milk and ate his slice of bread and butter before going to bed.

It was a curious, lonely, silent child who spent his time in the Herne Hill garden watching the flowers, watching the birds, watching the sky and the clouds, and keenly interested in the pebbles. He was quite a fearless child in spite of his old-fashioned ways, and he never flinched when a great black Newfoundland dog once flew at him and bit away a corner of his mouth. The only thing that troubled him was the fear that the dog might be sent away. Once, too, when he tumbled head first into a deep tub of water, he very calmly shoved himself up again with the little watering-can which he happened to be holding in his hand, and his presence of mind probably saved his life. But he never learned to be good at games or sports, perhaps because he was too carefully guarded from all risks. Very unlike this was to one of his cousins, who was taught to ride by being put bareback on a pony and promised a thrashing if he fell off, and taught to swim by being thrown into the water and then left to make the best use he could of arms and legs.

There were two things besides writing books and reading them which John loved, and one was drawing,

beginning with printing letters and making maps, and the other was the study of all things belonging to nature, especially rocks and stones.

"From boyhood my son has been an artist," said his father, "but he has been a geologist from infancy."

So the child grew into boyhood, and the greatest joy of his life came to him when he went with his father and mother to Switzerland.

They travelled in the same old delightful way in the family chariot, with Ann as before on the dickey, but the days of pretending to be a postboy were past for John, and now he had either a sketch-book or note-book in his hands, and childish things were left behind.

Thus it was that the boy, who was to become one of the greatest masters of the English language, who was to make others see through his eyes the beauties of nature in a marvellous way, caught his first sight of the Alps which was never afterwards forgotten.

"I well remember," he says, "watching the line of the Black Forest hills enlarged rise as we crossed the plain of the Rhine — Gates of the hills, opening for me a new life—to cease no more, except at the Gates of the Hills whence one returns not."

After that childhood was left behind, although the things chosen and loved then went on growing with his growth, so that at the end he could say he was still just the same little child, only grown older and wiser.

QUEEN VICTORIA

THERE was a good deal of stir and excitement in Kensington Palace on the 24th of May 1819, when it was known that a little princess had been born under the homely old roof. The Duke of Kent, her father, was content to think his child was English by birth as well as by descent, and if her German mother thought longingly of her own land, and felt England to be but a land of exile, still, she too was glad that the baby should first see the light in an English home, and be from the first hour of her birth an English princess.

For who knew what the future might hold in store for the little one? Who could tell what call England might some day make upon this child? She was not of very great importance in the eyes of the world just now, perhaps, for there were others nearer the throne than she was, but already the shadow of a crown rested on the little golden head, and the mother's anxious eyes saw that shadow clearly.

In fairy tales, when the fairy princess lies in her cradle and the fairies crowd round to bring her their gifts even they are not strong enough to prevent the dark shadow of trouble from forcing its way in and casting a gloom around the royal child.

So it was with little Princess Victoria. Trouble forced its way into the palace as easily as into the poorest home in the land, and when the baby was

only eight months old her father died, and her mother was left alone with only her children in a strange, unfriendly country where she was little known and little cared for.

It would have been so easy for that German mother to have taken the baby back to the dear home in Germany and brought her up there, but the Duchess of Kent never forgot that this child was an English princess and must be trained in English ways, amongst English people. It was the right path, not the easy one she sought, and though the nation did not treat her very kindly and the difficulties were many and wearisome, she never thought of shirking what she felt was her duty.

So the little princess grew up in her own land, very much like any other English child, except that she had fewer pleasures and was much more strictly brought up than most children.

Sometimes it seemed as if she might grow up too perfect, hedged in as she was by so many strict rules and regulations, but it was soon seen that there was no fear of that. The little lady had a decided will of her own, and when it pleased her could be as naughty as if she were just an ordinary child, and not a princess at all.

Anyone, for instance, might have thought that a well-conducted royal baby, when carried in the arms of a bishop, would show some respect for a church dignitary, but Victoria thought otherwise, and suddenly and gleefully buried both her hands in the bishop's wig and shook it until the powder flew all around in a white cloud, holding on grimly in spite of remonstrances, and carrying away at last a handful of hair in each tiny fist.

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Well might her nurse have remonstrated in the words once addressed to another royal baby, "Your highness, princesses don't do such things," and have received the calm reply, "Well, this princess does."

Later on, when she was old enough to go riding on her donkey through Kensington Gardens, she was extremely pleased with this mode of royal progress, and firmly refused to get down and exercise her own little legs. She preferred to ride, thank you. In vain the nurses tried to persuade her. She took no notice of them, and it was only when the old soldier who led her donkey came and reasoned with her that she gave in.

"It will do my princess so much good to walk a little," he said, whereupon his princess was graciously pleased to descend.

But Victoria was by no means allowed to have her own way on all occasions, and she was taught very early that her little dole of pocket-money must be spent wisely, and that when it was gone she could buy nothing more until the next instalment was due.

She had been buying toys one day, and presents for her mother and stepsister, and had spent her last penny when she saw a special box which she wanted for one of her cousins. But it cost half a crown, and her money was all gone. The shopkeeper at once reached down the box and put it with the other purchases, but her governess stopped him.

"No," she said; "you see the princess has not got the money, therefore she cannot buy the box."

The shopkeeper then offered to put the box aside, and this was agreed to. Before long quarter-day came round and the princess received her pocket-money, and on that very day at seven o'clock, before the shop was

open, there stood the donkey at the shop door, with the eager little princess on its back, anxious to claim her purchase.

When it came to learning the A B C fresh difficulties arose, for the little princess had no wish to learn her letters and saw no reason why she should. But if she was firm her mother was firmer still, and told her that if she refused to learn her letters she would never be able to read all those books which were lying on the table. So at last she gave in and said somewhat sorrowfully:

"I learn too."

"There is no royal road by which you can make yourself mistress of music," said her music-master severely one day, when his patience had been worn out by the little princess's inattention and naughtiness.

Victoria looked up with an imp of mischief in her blue eyes. She jumped suddenly off the music-stool, closed the piano, and turning the lock, carried off the key.

"You see," she cried, triumphantly holding the key up, "there *is* a royal road by which I can make myself mistress of the piano."

But if any such tales came to her mother's ears, Victoria no doubt received fitting punishment. When the duchess came to the schoolroom to inquire how the child was getting on with her lessons, sometimes the governess was forced to give an unfavourable report.

"Once the princess was rather troublesome," she was obliged to confess on the day of the music lesson.

"No," said Victoria quickly, "it was twice. Don't you remember?"

She was a straightforward, fearless child, "not given

to crying or complaints," and although she was so simply brought up and kept so much in the nursery, she knew how to behave in a courtly manner.

"What music would you like the band to play?" asked William IV, her "Uncle King," one day when the little princess was paying him a visit. And without a moment's hesitation the little courtier replied:

"God Save the King."

Another day when visiting her aunt, Queen Adelaide, she rather forgot her courtly manners, for when she was asked what she would like to do for a special treat, she answered at once that the thing she would like best of all would be "to clean the windows."

It was not a very sunny life for a child, for her mother was perhaps over anxious that she should learn many lessons and not be spoilt with many pleasures, but she was a happy little soul and made the most of her holidays. She had a special love for dolls, and played with them until she was nearly fourteen, dressing them with the greatest care and writing down all their names and characters in a little book. They were small wooden Dutch dolls, which the children of to-day would call ugly, but she loved them and they were quite real people to her. Their clothes were so daintily and beautifully made that it was a wonder that any small hands could have sewn such fairy stitches and taken such infinite pains.

It was when the little princess was nine years old that Sir Walter Scott first saw her, and he tells about the meeting in his diary.

"I dined with the Duchess of Kent," he wrote, "and was introduced to the little Princess Victoria—the heir-apparent to the House, as things now stand. This

little lady is educated with much care, and watched so closely that no busy maid has a moment to whisper 'You are the Heir of England.' I suspect if we could dissect the little heart we should find that some pigeon or other bird of the air had carried the matter. She is fair, like the Royal family."

But Sir Walter Scott was wrong, not even a little bird had carried the news to her that she might one day be Queen of England, and it was not until some years later that she was told.

She was sitting in the schoolroom one day with her governess, deeply interested in her history lesson, when she turned over the page of the history book and found between the leaves a new list of the kings and queens of England which had been placed there.

"I never saw this before," she said, looking up.

"It was not thought necessary that you should, princess," answered the governess.

There was a pause while Victoria still studied the paper.

"I see I am nearer the throne than I thought," she went on slowly.

"So it is, ma'am," said the governess, watching her.

Again there was a silence for a few minutes. In those days children were taught to speak very carefully, and their remarks often sounded rather prim and precise.

"Now many a child would boast," she said, "but they don't know the difficulty. There is much splendour, but there is much responsibility."

Then suddenly all the primness and moralising vanished, and the child's big heart and earnest, true character came naturally out. This great inheritance, of

which some child might feel inclined to boast, this load of responsibility resting so quaintly on the childish shoulders, was something very real to her, and the chord of duty was touched which in all her after life gave forth no uncertain sound. Turning to her governess, she held out her hand and said simply, "I will be good."

It was a child's promise, not lightly given but coming from the depths of the child's heart, a promise that was to stretch like a golden thread through the years to come, leading and guiding her upward and onward, cutting through difficulties, shining in the dark hours of life, gleaming through many a gorgeous pageant on earth, vanishing only at last through the golden gate of heaven. A golden thread indeed, directing not only her own life but the fortunes and honour of England; for that great Empire whose flag is flung from North to South, from East to West, was to grow greater still under the wise rule of Victoria the Good.

Looking forward into the dim years of the future, well might the need have been felt for some great vow, some hero's arm to fight for and uphold the honour of our land, and instead there stood a little, round-faced, fair-haired child with earnest eyes and uplifted hand, and greater than any warrior's vow sounded the simple childish words, "I will be good."

GEORGE ELIOT

SCARCELY anyone to-day ever thinks of the brilliant authoress by her real name of Mary Ann Evans. It is still as "George Eliot" she is known, the name she took when she first began to write her books, and did not care to let the world know who it was who wrote them.

But although the day was to come when the great world should ring with the fame of George Eliot, there was no stir in the little world about Arbury Farm when Farmer Evans' youngest child, little Mary Ann Evans, was born. Her birthday was on the 22nd of November, S. Cecilia's Day, and it might have been thought that her father, being a good churchman, would have named the baby Cecilia, but it was by the good old English name of Mary Ann that she was baptized in the church at Chilvers Coton, known afterwards as "Shapperton Church."

It was a very peaceful home to which the baby came, and when she was four months old and the family moved to the charming old house of Griff, with its red brick walls so cosily covered with ivy, she was like a bird in "the warm little nest where her affections were fledged."

Griff was on the Arbury estate in Warwickshire, and the quiet country-house was far away from the noise and bustle of towns, with only the daily coach as a

link between it and the busy world. For in 1819, when little Mary Ann Evans was born, it was the stage-coach that carried travellers from place to place, brought the news, and had charge of the post-bags. Not that there were many letters to carry, for postage stamps had not even been invented then, and it was so expensive to send a letter that people never wrote unless they had something very important to say.

The life at Griff was very quiet and uneventful for the three children who lived there with their invalid mother and busy father, who was always working with both head and hands. Chrissy, the eldest, was rather a prim little girl, a great favourite with her aunts, who lived near, and with whom she spent a great deal of her time, but Isaac and Mary Ann were the best of friends and always played together. The boy was three years older than his little sister, but she followed him about like a shadow wherever he went, and whatever he did, she tried to do as well. She loved Isaac with all the strength of her warm little heart, and thought there was no one in the world like him.

Mary Ann was fond of her grey-haired father too, he was so tall and strong, just like a giant, and yet he was as gentle as a woman with his "little wench." He carried her about in his arms as if she were but a feather-weight, and could tell her the most exciting tales, tales of things that had really happened, to which she listened with breathless attention.

The days of the French Revolution were not long past, and many a story did the child hear of that dreadful time and of what the great Napoleon was now doing.

There never was a stauncher little Tory than Mary

Ann as she listened to her father's views on revolutions and rebels. There was something in the very way he said the word "government," when he talked of what a good strong government should do, that thrilled her, and the word "rebel" had a tremendous sound of evil, even if she was not quite sure what it meant.

Driving about the country, the busy land-agent and farmer would sometimes take his little girl out with him, and the child, standing between his knees as he drove, watched everything with wide open eyes of interest, and listened to all the country talk with eager attention, always quite ready to give her opinion on any subject, if she was asked. She was like a little elf standing there, with her bright eyes and her hair flying in all directions, those untidy elf-locks that were the despair of her careful mother's heart.

The mother was very delicate and quite unable to look after the children, so they were sent very early to school, Isaac and Mary Ann being sent to a dame's school close at hand, when Mary Ann was only just four.

It was no hardship for the little girl to go to school as long as she could be with her beloved brother, and lessons did not trouble her much. Although she was so old-fashioned she was not at all sharp, or quick at learning to read, but that was perhaps because she was much more fond of play. She had quite made up her mind that she was going to be very great and grand when she grew up, and she was anxious that people should know this. It was worth while even trying to impress the servants, and when the farm maid came into the parlour where the piano stood, Mary Ann climbed up on to the music-stool with an air of great

importance and began to play very grandly, although she did not know a note of music.

It was a sad day for the little sister when her brother was sent away to a school at Coventry. Home would indeed have been a very desolate place without him if she had been left alone, but even one little chattering tongue and one pair of restless feet were too much for the invalid mother, and Mary Ann was also sent away to a boarding-school to join her sister at Attleboro, not far from Griff. She was only five years old and was but a little child to go into a world of big schoolgirls, but she was not on that account unhappy, for the girls were very kind to her.

Only school was a very, very cold place and the schoolroom fire was very small, and only those who were lucky enough or strong enough to secure a foremost place had any chance of keeping warm. Outside the circle round the fire, the poor little shivering child wrapped her arms in her pinafore and felt the cold creeping creeping up, until she wondered if she was ever going to feel warm again.

But the nights were worse than the days, for although it was warm in bed, it was more dreadful to feel frightened than to feel cold. There was nothing really to frighten her, but every night her fears came trooping out in the darkness and attacked the poor little quaking figure in her small bed. She never told anyone about them, but both cold and fears helped to hurt her in many ways.

The holidays of course were a time of wild delight, when she had Isaac to play with again, and cold and quaking fears were left behind. When a little girl spends her days playing hide-and-seek in the great

barns, fishing in the pond, driving round the country and enjoying herself until she is tired, fears have not a chance when bedtime comes, for before they can troop out and seize her, she is safe and happy in the land of dreams.

Books were also beginning to give Mary Ann a good deal of pleasure about this time, although she had very few of them. There was *The Linnet's Life*, the first book her father gave her, which she read over and over again until she knew it by heart, and then came the gift from a kind old gentleman of *Æsop's Fables*, which made her feel as if she had entered into a new and wonderful land of delight.

There was only one little cloud in the blue sky of those holiday times, and that was the fact that Isaac had a pony given to him and he seemed to love that pony more than he loved Mary Ann. The games in the garden, the fishing in the pond, all the delights they had shared together were neglected when there was a pony to ride, and he would gallop away without one regret while his poor deserted little sister watched him go, with eyes full of tears and a sob in her throat. It was always the one desire of her heart to stand first with those she loved, and who would have thought that a pony could have taken her place?

Mary Ann was almost nine years old when she was sent to her next boarding-school at Nuneaton, and here her school-days were a great deal happier. To begin with, she was very fond of her governess, Miss Lewis, and love always spelled happiness to the child. Then, too, she began to live in a new world, the world of books, and when she once entered that enchanted country she was as happy as the day was long. Every book

that came her way was a treasure, and whether she was deep in the *Pilgrim's Progress* or Defoe's *History of the Devil* she was equally interested and equally happy.

At home it vexed her careful mother's heart that she should burn so many candles and hurt her eyes by reading in bed, but if that was stopped, she always found some other way of spending her time with her beloved books. Even Isaac and his pony were forgotten when she entered her enchanted land.

At school she made few friends, her books were all the friends she wanted, but she was fond of her lessons too, and did her work well, and specially loved writing her compositions.

Up in Scotland the Wizard of the North had been weaving his spells, and the little girl in the Midlands of England was just beginning to feel the magic of his touch. A volume of *Waverley* had been lent by a family friend, and Mary Ann was just in the middle of the enchantment when the book was returned, no one guessing that she was reading it.

What was to be done? *Waverley* must be finished somehow, so the child set herself carefully to write out the story as far as she had read it, and then made up the rest for herself, writing it all out in the childish hand-writing that was so like spider's legs.

It was childish writing then, but the thoughts came already from a fruitful store garnered in the depth of her childish mind, a store which in after years, worked by her splendid genius, was to supply the world with such stories as only "George Eliot" could write.

FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE

On the 12th of May, the month of flowers, in the year 1820, a little English baby was born at the Villa Colombaia, just outside Florence, the fair city of the Arno. Spring had been busy sowing the fields with flowers and spreading a carpet of tender green beneath the grey olive trees. She decked with delicate budding leaves the knotted festoons of vines, and scattered blossoms abroad with such a lavish hand that the old city of palaces, with its sun-baked roofs and narrow, shadowy streets, now well deserved its name of the City of Flowers.

New life was springing up everywhere, and the little new life at the Villa Colombaia lifted its face to the light in company with the flowers.

"We will call her Florence," said her mother. So the City of Flowers gave its dear name to the little English baby, who was one day to write it in letters of gold upon the scroll of fame.

It was not very long before the English family went back to their home in England, but the baby they carried with them must always have seemed a link with the beautiful old city, the rainbow-coloured flowers of spring, and the sunshine and blue skies of Italy.

The first home that Florence knew in England was Lea Hall, in Derbyshire, but when she was five years old, and her sister Frances was six, they went to live in

a new house called Lea Hurst, which their father had just rebuilt, and here all the rest of her childhood's summer days were spent.

It was a beautiful home, for Mr. Nightingale loved all beautiful things, and would have everything around him as charming as possible. The windows facing south looked over lawns and gardens and wooded slopes across the valley where the Derwent water wound its way, like a silver thread, to the hills beyond, and on every side the view was lovely. But surely most charming of all must have been the sight of the two little maidens in their dainty muslin frocks, Leghorn hats, and sandal shoes, as they played about the garden slopes, among the beds of purple pansies, blue forget-me-nots, and crimson wallflowers.

The children had each her own special garden, in which they worked diligently, planting, weeding, and watering, but it was Florence who was specially fond of flowers. It seemed as if the old City of Flowers had laid its charm upon her as well as gave her its name.

The two little sisters were very fond of their dolls, too, although they showed their fondness in very different ways, and brought up their families on quite different plans. Florence's dolls were all delicate and needed constant care. They spent most of their lives in bed, going through dangerous illnesses, while they were most carefully and tenderly nursed by their little mother, who doctored them, and tempted their appetites with dainty dishes until they were well again. Scarcely were they up and dressed, however, than some fresh ailment laid them low once more, and the nursing began over again. Frances's dolls, on the contrary, were scarcely ever in bed at all. They led stirring

lives of adventure and excitement, but when an accident occurred and an arm was broken or a leg came off at the joint, it was Florence who tenderly "set" the arm, and put the injured joint in splints.

And if it was interesting to nurse dolls, how much more worth while was it to take care of live animals! Florence looked upon all animals as her friends, more especially those that were rather ugly and unfortunate. Anything that needed her care appealed at once to her tender little heart. It was she who welcomed and admired the very commonplace kittens which the stable-cat hid from less friendly eyes; and the old pony that was past work and of no use to anyone knew that his little mistress loved him as much as ever. Whenever she passed the paddock he came trotting over to see her, and then he would poke his nose into her pockets until he found an apple or a carrot, which was always hidden somewhere ready for this daily game of hide-and-seek. The birds, too, seemed to know and trust her, and even the squirrels came darting down for any nuts she carried with her, as she walked through the woods, evidently looking upon her as quite one of themselves.

Only half the year was spent at Lea Hurst, for in winter and early spring the family went to live in their other house, Embley Park, in Hampshire.

There were but few railways in those days, and so the journey was made by coach or in their own carriage, and it was always a delightful time for the two children, who loved the excitement of driving along the coaching roads and stopping to rest at nights at the wayside inns.

During those winter months at Embley, Florence

and her sister were kept very strictly at lessons, with their governess. Their father believed that girls should be taught quite as thoroughly as boys, and he planned his little daughters' lessons just as carefully as if they had been sons. With him Florence learned Greek and Latin and mathematics, and was extremely quick at learning foreign languages.

The little girls were taught, too, by their mother to work their samplers and to do fine sewing, so there was not much spare time in their days, although some hours were always set aside for them to run about outside with their dogs, to scramble about the woods or ride their ponies up hill and down dale.

From her mother, too, Florence learned the pleasure of visiting the village people and getting to know them in their homes, and she was always eager to be the messenger when there was a pudding or jelly to be carried to some invalid.

She was riding on her pony over the Hampshire downs one day, after a round of visits with the vicar, when they noticed that old Roger, the shepherd, was having hard work to collect his scattered sheep, and that he had no dog to help him.

The vicar stopped and called to him.

"Where's your dog?" he asked.

"The boys have been throwing stones at him, your reverence, and have broken his leg," answered the old man.

"Do you mean to say Cap's leg is broken?" asked Florence anxiously. She knew the name of every dog about the place. "Can nothing be done for him? Where is he?"

The old man shook his head.

"No, there's naught can be done, missy," he said. "He will never be good for anything again. I've left him lying yonder in that shed. I'll have to bring along a rope this evening and put an end to him."

Florence turned beseeching eyes upon the vicar.

"Can't we go and see?" she asked.

The vicar nodded, and they galloped off together to the lonely shed, and in a moment Florence had slid off her pony, entered the shed, and was kneeling by the side of the suffering dog. She always seemed to understand the language of animals, and as she patted and soothed and spoke in a low tone to poor Cap, he seemed at once to understand her, and feebly tried to wag his tail in response, looking up at her with brown eyes full of grateful trust.

The vicar, following after, carefully examined the injured leg and declared it was not broken at all, but that with careful nursing the dog might get well.

"What shall I do first?" asked Florence anxiously.

"We might try a hot compress," said the vicar.

Florence did not know exactly what a hot compress was, but when she understood that it was a cloth wrung out in very hot water, she set to work at once. The shepherd's boy was told to light a fire of sticks and fill a kettle, and then came the question of a cloth and bandages. Looking round, Florence's quick eye caught sight of the shepherd's clean smock hanging behind the door, and this she declared was the very thing that was needed.

"Mamma will give him a new one," she said, as she tore the smock into strips.

Very tenderly then did she doctor the swollen leg, and in spite of the pain, the dog lay quite still under

her hand, watching her all the time with his understanding, grateful eyes.

A message was sent home to explain where Florence was, and all that afternoon she watched by the side of the suffering dog, and bathed the poor leg until the swelling began to go down.

It was evening before the shepherd came, and he came with a slow step, sorrowfully carrying a rope in his hand.

"Deary me, miss," he exclaimed in astonishment, when the dog gave a whine of welcome and tried to come to him, "why, you've worked a wonder. I never thought to see the old dog greet me again."

"You can throw away the rope, for he's going to get quite well now," said Florence, "only you must nurse him carefully, and I will show you how to make hot compresses."

Roger was only too glad to do all that the little lady directed, and had no words to express his thanks. But it was the look in Cap's grateful eyes that was all the thanks that Florence cared for.

She was only a child then, always ready to help anything that needed her care, tending her flowers and learning to be orderly and diligent, but she was laying the foundation of the great work that was to crown her life. The look of gratitude in the eyes of a dog moved her childish, pitiful heart, but how well was she to learn to know that look in the eyes of suffering men, when the very name of Florence Nightingale meant hope and comfort to the wounded soldiers, and the sight of her face bending over them was to them as the face of an angel.

JENNY LIND

Once upon a time, as the fairy tales say, there was born in the northern city of Stockholm a baby girl, who possessed as magic a gift as any princess in the fairy tales of Hans Andersen.

At the time when this baby was born, in the year 1820, Hans Andersen was a boy of fifteen living not very far off, in Denmark, with all those beautiful fairy tales still in his head, and he did not meet our princess until she was quite grown up, but the moment he saw her he knew at once she was wonderful enough to have lived all along in one of his own fairy tales.

Jenny Lind, of course, was not really a fairy princess, nor indeed a princess at all. She was only a little Swedish girl, born in a poor home in Stockholm, where no one gave her a very warm welcome. Her young father could not earn money enough for himself and his wife, and now here was another mouth to fill! Even the baby's mother did not feel specially glad at the arrival of her little daughter. She, poor woman, had to work hard and kept a day-school for other people's children, and a child of her own was rather in the way. Nobody guessed then that the baby had a magic gift which was to bring her fame and fortune. She was just a little unwelcome baby, christened very grandly "Johanna Maria," but known always by the

funny, homely name of "Jenny." Life was to be full of changes for little Jenny, and she was sent off at once to live in the country under the care of Carl Ferndal, organist and parish clerk of the church of Sollentuna. This man and his wife took good care of the adopted baby, and for four years Jenny lived the life of a country child and was as happy as the day was long. She was a real child of the woods and meadows, and loved nothing so much as rolling on the grass, picking wild flowers, and listening to the song of the birds. Birds and flowers seemed to have a special message for her, and she loved them with a love that never changed through all her changing life.

Then at the end of four years the country life vanished and town life began for the little maiden, for her mother quarrelled with the organist and carried Jenny back to Stockholm.

Everything was strange to the child in the big town. She did not like so many people or so much noise. She wished she was back in the woods listening to the birds. Town noises were all so frightening and ugly. Then suddenly she discovered that sounds could be pleasant in a town too. Every morning as the soldiers marched up the streets, they made music on their bugles, and the tune they played went singing on in her head all day long, just as the music of the birds used to do in the green woods.

At last one morning when Jenny thought she was quite alone and the soldiers' tune was still singing softly in her head, she crept up to the piano, which had been left open that her stepsister Amelia might practise upon it, and began softly to pick out the tune with one finger.

"Amelia, is that you practising?" cried out the old grandmother, who was passing.

There was no answer, but the music stopped at once. The grandmother looked into the room. There stood the square piano, but no one to be seen near it. This was very strange. The grandmother rubbed her eyes and looked again. She was sure she had heard someone playing. Amelia might be hiding perhaps, so in she came and poked about behind chairs and table, until at last she caught sight of a tiny figure crouching inside the square piano, and stooping down she dragged out a very frightened and very dusty little Jenny.

"Child," said her grandmother, "was that you playing?"

Jenny caught her breath with a great sob and confessed that she had tried to play on the piano without permission.

The grandmother looked down at the tiny child with amazement and almost with awe. She could scarcely believe that Jenny could have made the music she had heard. Already she caught the echo of that magic gift, the very spirit of music which no one had as yet guessed that the child possessed.

"Mark my words," she said afterwards to Jenny's mother, "that child will bring you help."

That might perhaps happen some day, thought her mother, but just now the child was rather a hindrance than a help, and help was sorely needed. The day-school kept by Frau Lind was not a success, and after a few years she was obliged to give it up, and then Jenny changed her home once more.

The steward or gatekeeper of the House of the Widows, where Jenny's grandmother had found a home,

had no children and wanted to adopt a little girl, and this seemed the very thing for Jenny. It was a comfortable, happy home for the child, and she would be able to see her grandmother whom she loved.

All this time the spirit of music had grown with the child's growth, and in the new home she could no more help singing than the birds in the trees.

"As a child I sang with every step I took, and with every jump my feet made," she said many years afterwards.

The little singing maiden, hopping about the quiet Widows' Home, must have seemed like a bird shut up in rather a gloomy cage, but Jenny was quite happy. As long as she might sing to herself she was never lonely, and then, too, she had always her dear cat with the blue ribbon round his neck for company, and he was most patient and polite in listening to her song.

There was a window in the steward's house which looked down upon the busy street leading to S. Jacob's church, and here on the broad window-seat Jenny used to curl herself up, with the cat sitting opposite, and sing to her heart's content.

The passers-by, when they heard the child's voice, would pause and look up. They half expected to see a bird-cage hanging there, but instead, all that was to be seen was a round-faced little girl and a solemn cat with a blue ribbon round his neck.

But wherever the song came from it was very sweet and haunting, and seemed to go straight to the heart, so the people always smiled as they looked upward, and were never tired of listening.

Now among the people who passed to and fro under the window of the steward's house was the maid of a

Mademoiselle Lundberg, a performer at the Royal Opera House. This maid could not forget the sound of the child's voice, and she thought of it so often that at last she told her mistress about the little girl who sang to her cat in the window of the House of the Widows.

It sounded a very pretty tale, and Mademoiselle Lundberg began to think that she too would like to hear the child with the bird-like voice, so she bade her maid find out who the little girl was, and ask if she might come and sing to her.

There was nothing very fairy-like about Jenny in those days. She herself tells us that she was "a small, ugly, broad-nosed, shy, undergrown girl," but when she stood before the lady who had sent for her, and began to sing, the magic of her music cast a spell over all who listened.

"The child is a genius," cried Mademoiselle Lundberg. Then turning to Jenny's mother, who had come with her, she said, "You must have her educated for the stage."

But Frau Lind would not hear of such a thing, and the old grandmother, too, shook her head when she was told. They disliked the stage and thought it would be an evil life for little Jenny.

"Very well, then," said Mademoiselle Lundberg, "you must at any rate have her taught singing."

There could be no objection to that, and after talking it over Jenny's mother set out, with a letter of introduction in one hand and her little daughter in the other, to seek an interview with Herr Croclius, the singing-master at the Royal Theatre.

There was something very grand and worldly and almost frightening about the broad flight of steps which

led to the theatre, and as the mother and child climbed up, Frau Lind's heart failed her again and all her doubts came rushing back. She stood still and hesitated, half inclined to turn round and go home.

But an eager little hand was dragging her forward, and Jenny begged her to be quick and come on. Jenny was quite sure that there must be no turning back, and so, half unwillingly, her mother allowed herself to be pulled along until she reached the room of Herr Croclius, and they knocked timidly at the door.

The singing-master listened kindly to what they had to say, and then bade Jenny sing one of her songs to him, more out of kindness than because he took any great interest in the small, plain-looking child.

But the moment the song was begun all was changed. Again the magic of her gift wove its wondrous spell, and the tears gathered in the master's eyes as he listened to the pure, fresh notes. Then when she had finished he rose to his feet and held out his hand.

"You must come with me," he said, "to Count Puke, the head of the theatre. We must show him what a treasure we have found."

Now the Count was not at all inclined to think that Jenny was a treasure at all, and he frowned when he looked at the shy, plain little girl.

"How old is she?" he asked, to begin with.

"Nine years old," said Croclius.

"Nine!" exclaimed the Count. "But this is not a crèche. It is the King's Theatre."

He looked quite crossly at the small figure standing there. A child of that age was only fit to be kept in a nursery, what was the use of troubling a busy man with such foolishness?

"Well," said Croclius, "if the Count will not hear her, then I will teach her for nothing myself, and she will one day astonish you."

Indeed she had already begun to astonish the Count, for he thought after all there must be something wonderful about the commonplace child if Croclius, the great singing-master, was willing to teach her without any payment. At any rate he would allow her to sing to him, and would judge for himself.

So again Jenny sang one of the songs which she had sung to the cat when they sat together in the sunny window, and once again the spell worked. She always forgot her shyness when she once began to sing, and her whole face was transformed and "shone with heavenly light."

In one of Hans Andersen's tales there is the story of a nightingale that charmed the Emperor and all his court with its wonderful singing, although it was merely a plain little grey bird that almost shocked the court with its humble appearance.

"Is it possible?" said the lord-in-waiting. "I never imagined it could be such a little plain simple thing like that."

But when the Emperor heard the song of the little grey bird, the tears came into his eyes and rolled down his cheeks, and the song went straight to his heart. He wished to reward the nightingale, but she would take nothing.

"I have seen tears in an Emperor's eyes, and that is my richest reward," she said.

That is what Jenny Lind might have felt when she finished her song, and looked up at the two men who were listening to her. The Count was like the Emperor

in the fairy tale. He could only see the plain little grey bird through a mist of tears which filled his eyes and rolled down his cheeks.

Here was a treasure indeed. Such a singing bird must not be allowed to escape, and so it was at once arranged that Jenny should become the adopted child of the Royal Theatre, and that she was to be educated and taught to sing, all at the expense of the Government.

Frau Lind gave her consent very unwillingly, but it was a great matter that the child should be provided for, and there seemed nothing else to be done.

So the little grey bird began her training, which was to lead to such a world-wide success. She was scarcely ten years old when she began to act at the Royal Theatre, and her acting was almost as full of charm as her singing, so that she might have become a great actress as well as a great singer.

She was taught, of course, many other things besides acting and singing, and did her lessons just like any other little girl. Her sewing was perhaps the thing she did best, for she loved to put in neat, dainty stitches, and worked most exquisitely.

"Madame's stitches never come out," said her maid when Jenny was grown up.

It might be thought a strange life for a child, and there was much evil around her, but she grew up like a daisy in a garden, white and pure, with gold at the heart of her. Like S. Margaret, she kept herself unspotted from the world, and the purity of her heart put to flight the dragon of evil.

Even when the world began to ring with the fame of this wonderful "nightingale," when kings and

queens begged that she would come and sing to them in their palaces, when they "crowned her with flowers and filled her lap with gold," Jenny Lind through it all remained, like the princess in the fairy tale, "as good as gold," unspoilt and simple, "with the manners of a princess, the simplicity of a child, and the goodness of an angel."

ROSA BONHEUR

It was a simple, rather poor home in Bordeaux that welcomed the birth of Marie Rosalie Bonheur on the 16th of March 1822.

Raymond Bonheur, her father, was a struggling young artist who had married one of his pupils, Sophie Marquis, but if there was little money in the house there was much love, and if the home was simple it was beautiful too, for both Raymond and his wife loved all that was beautiful and all that was good.

It had been uphill work for the young father, and he had had to make his own way in the world. His father had been a cook in one of the great French families, and Raymond's first attempts at drawing had been to try and copy the ornaments made in butter and sugar for the dinner-table. Then, as he showed great talent and perseverance, he was sent to a drawing-school at Bordeaux and later he began to give lessons himself and married his beloved Sophie.

At the time when the first baby came, everything was going well and the little home was fairly comfortable, for Sophie was a good musician and earned something by giving lessons, while the grandmother who lived with them did a great deal of the housework and left her free. So there was enough and to spare for the little new-comer, who was the joy of their hearts.

Naturally, as soon as Rosalie began to know how to

use her hands and her feet she was never tired of trotting about after her father, and, whenever it was possible, snatching one of his crayons in her fat little fist. Any flat surface served her for a canvas, and the door was specially suitable.

"Papa, papa! Salie makes pictures," she cried, triumphantly pointing to a very scrawly design of round O's and unsteady strokes on the smooth door.

"Rosalie is already showing a taste for the arts," said her father, smiling.

But although he laughed over her attempts he had no desire that she should grow up to be an artist, and he never encouraged her to try and draw. Thinking over his own hardships and struggles, he wanted his little girl to choose a happier, easier kind of work.

As time went on, life became more and more difficult for the artist's family. There were two little brothers now as well as Rosalie, and the grandparents were getting old and feeble. Work, too, was scarce, and at last Raymond Bonheur made up his mind to go to Paris and see if fortune would smile upon him there. It was hard to leave his wife and children behind, but he felt sure he would soon find work and be able to make a home for them.

The months that followed were difficult both for him and for the wife he had left at Bordeaux, but the home letters always cheered him, and Rosalie's "pictures of little men," painted so carefully for her father, made him smile and long to see his small daughter again.

"Rosalie is sending you in the box her first tooth, which has just come out, and a picture, with a promise of nicer ones in the future," wrote her mother, and

then she adds, "I don't know what Rosalie will be, but I have a conviction that she will be no ordinary woman."

Many a mother has thought exactly the same of her own particular little goose, which after all has never become a swan, but in this case Rosalie's mother was right.

At last the happy day came when the home in Paris was ready, and Raymond wrote many directions to his wife about the journey, which would take them three days, bidding her not to grieve too much at leaving Bordeaux. "And you, my little ones, try to be good. Look round and fix in your memory the spot you are leaving, for many years may go by before you see it again. At last you are about to become Parisians!"

The six-year-old Rosalie was not at all likely to forget that spot, and at first Paris was but a poor exchange for the wide, open country and the large sunny garden where she had spent most of her little life. It was dreadful to live in a dusty street, with nothing but houses all around, and although it was springtime it seemed chilly and dull in the busy town, and she missed the sunshine and warmth of her southern home. Even the bread tasted all wrong. Indeed, unlike the delicious salty bread of Bordeaux, it had no taste at all.

At first there seemed nothing to admire about the new home, but by and by Rosalie began to find out quite a number of things that were pleasant to look at even in the dusty street of the Rue S. Antoine.

Almost opposite the windows of the house where the Bonheur family lived was the church of S. Paul, with its beautiful porch, and once through that porch,

Rosalie learned to find her away into the dim side chapels where there were pictures to be seen. At first, coming in out of the daylight, all was gloomy and indistinct, but if a little girl sat down patiently on one of the marble steps, and looked up at the dim picture, gradually rich beautiful colours began to glow out of the twilight, and the kind gentle face of the Madonna or some saint looked down at her. It was like watching for the stars to come out at night, or searching for violets among dark green leaves.

There was another pleasure, too, in that same street, and that was the great wooden boar sitting in state on his stand outside the pork butcher's shop at the corner. He was a fearsome beast, with open mouth showing fierce tusks, but Rosalie loved all animals, and even a wooden beast was better than nothing. Every time she passed she stopped to greet him, and patted his head with a very friendly little hand.

Before very long it was arranged that Rosalie and her two little brothers should go to school together. In the same building where the Bonheurs now lived there was a Mons. Antin, who kept a small school and who offered to teach the artist's three children. It was not at all usual for boys and girls to be taught together, but Raymond Bonheur was rather fond of unusual ideas, and so Rosalie went with her brothers. She never knew what it meant to be shy or timid, and was quite capable of holding her own among the boys. In fact there is no doubt she was a thorough little tomboy, and she herself tells us, "I was generally leader in all the games, and did not hesitate now and again to use my fists."

The sturdy little maid, with her thick, soft brown

hair, cut short and parted at the side, looked very like a boy, and might easily have been mistaken for one. Even at Bordeaux the old grandfather used to shake his head over his granddaughter's boyish ways, and tell her mother what he thought about them.

"You think you have a daughter," he said. "It is a mistake, Rosalie is a boy in petticoats."

There were stirring times in Paris when Rosalie was eight years old, and on the very day of the Revolution of July, a little sister Juliette was born.

There was a cannon actually standing outside their very door, ready to fire on the Place de la Bastille, and evidently both Rosalie and her father found the cannon much more exciting than the new baby, for there they were both outside watching all that was going on. Raymond, that he might have a better view, climbed above the big entrance door, while Rosalie stood below, and when the cannon was fired, the door was so violently shaken that her father lost his hold and came down head first, only just missing her.

The good, patient mother must have had her hands very full in those days, but she never complained, and was always cheerful and sweet-tempered. Her husband had many strange ideas, but she always shared his enthusiasm and believed in his noble ideals, and if her little daughter was a tomboy, the child had the warmest heart, and was loyal and obedient and loving.

Life was made a little more difficult just then for the family since Raymond had decided to join the new society, known as Saint Simonianism, and went to live with the brethren at the "convent" at Menilmontant. All the world was to be made different, evil was to disappear, and everything that was good was to take its

place, while at the same time women were to have equal rights with men.

Many great and clever men joined the society, and when on Sundays the Bonheur children went to see their father, they learned to know people who were well worth knowing, and who remained friends to them all their lives.

The children's mother was quite as eager about this new Christianity as their father, and she and the children rather gloried in suffering for the cause when they walked through the streets in the somewhat queer garments of the Saint Simonians, and the street-boys hurled insults and stones at them.

But although the new ideas were very lofty and grand, they did not provide any money for daily bread, and the burden of living fell very heavily on the poor mother's shoulders. Uncomplaining as ever she struggled on, but at last the end of the struggle came, and she died, when Rosalie was not yet twelve years old.

For a time the four little motherless children were left to the care of friends, and then to their joy their father made a new home for them on the Quai de l'Ecole, where they could all be together again.

It was quite time that Rosalie should have something to do, and her father wanted her to learn something more useful than drawing, which seemed the only thing she cared for. The best plan, he decided, was to send her to a dressmaker, where she might be taught to sew.

The dressmaker was found and Rosalie began her lessons, but it really was little use trying to teach that child to sew. Her fingers were clever enough when she held a pencil, but a needle was a different matter. Indeed, Rosalie's hands were most remarkable, they

were so exceedingly fine and small and supple, and she had "a most energetic thumb," but fingers and thumbs refused to do needlework. To sit in a dull room, on a straight-backed chair, and thread needles and put in careful stitches was more than Rosalie could endure. The moment Madame Gendorf's back was turned, Rosalie escaped from the sewing-room and ran over to the workshop where Mons. Gendorf was busy making percussion caps for fowling-pieces.

Now there was some sense in work like that, thought Rosalie, and she was quite eager to turn the wheel and help to make percussion caps, only in that way her sewing did not get on very fast, and so the dressmaking lessons came to an end.

The next thing to be tried was a boarding-school, and Rosalie was received as a pupil by Mme. Gibert in the Rue de Reuilly.

Little did the poor Madame guess what she was to suffer from the new pupil. Instead of learning gentle, quiet manners from her companions, Rosalie began to make them all almost as wild as herself. She was the leader in every kind of fun and mischief in the school, and her example infected all the rest of the pupils. Poor Madame wrung her hands in despair. What could one do when this troublesome child cut out the most ridiculous figures in paper, tied them to a lump of moistened bread, and flung them up to the ceiling, where they hung and danced and capered, to the joy of all the class and the wrath of the teacher?

At last it could be borne no longer! What was her horror one day to come home and find all her pupils in the garden engaged in a sham fight, with wooden sabres for weapons, and Rosalie, of course, leading the charge

right across her rose-plot, which was the pride of Madame's heart. That was the last straw. Mons. Bonheur was asked to remove his daughter before she did any further mischief.

After that Rosalie's school education came to an end. "If I am not mistaken," she says, "this Gibert experiment was the last attempt to 'polish me off.'"

Then it was that, at last, her father saw that it would be better to help Rosalie to do the one thing her heart was set upon. Every morning she worked in her father's studio when he was away, and said nothing about what she was doing, but one evening, when he returned earlier than usual, he found her finishing her first picture from life—a bunch of cherries.

"Why, that's quite pretty," he said. "You must now go to work in earnest."

Having once given in, he did indeed set her to work in earnest and taught her most carefully. The other children were at school, so Rosa had all his spare time, and he had never to complain of either idleness or inattention on her part. Every morning he set her something to do, either to draw from the cast or to copy an engraving or to make a study from nature, and at night he went over all she had done. Whenever he could, too, he took her long walks into the country that she might study landscapes, animals, and birds.

Erelong she was allowed to copy in the Louvre, and never was there a more diligent and serious student. She was known as "the little hussar" from her quaint dress, and she was perfectly happy working there all day, with her lunch of bread and fried potatoes and a draught of cold water from the courtyard.

English visitors, it is said, used often to stop and look

at her work, and say in careful French, "Very well, very well indeed," and then go on to more lavish praise in their own tongue.

Someone once said that Rosa was too modest to listen to these praises, but that remark made Rosalie laugh most heartily. It was not modesty, she said, which prevented her listening, but the fact that, as she did not understand English, listening was of no use to her.

Although the little artist worked so hard she did not yet begin to grow very serious, neither did she outgrow her love of childish games, for she tells us that when she went to give drawing lessons to a little Polish princess she and her pupil "did little else but slide up and down the highly polished floor of the big gallery of the Hotel Lambert."

All her life Rosalie had been fond of animals, and her ambition had always been to paint them, and now she began in earnest to collect her models and to follow her own special line.

Before very long her father's studio was like a Noah's Ark, and he must have suffered a good deal from the menagerie. There were rabbits, fowls, ducks, tame quails, a squirrel, a monkey, a goat, and many other animals, all gathered together at various times. In a letter, written to her by her father when she was in the country, he reports on the health of her live stock and says: "The canaries are singing 'Gloria Tibi Domine,' and the finch is getting steadier on its legs. The rats are off wandering somewhere or other, and the butterflies, transfixed by a pin in your box with the other insects, have not budged since their martyrdom. So you see all those you care about are thriving."

The favourite squirrel had a bad habit of gnawing through the picture cords, and once a large picture fell and smashed both easel and canvas, and would most likely have killed the artist too, if he had been standing in his usual place. After that the squirrel was shut up, but Rosalie could not bear to see him in prison, and took him out to the woods and set him at liberty.

Her love for animals was a very real and very deep feeling, and rather than see one suffer she would with her own hands put it out of its pain, however much it cost her to do it.

It is difficult to know when Rosalie's childhood ended and the famous Rosa Bonheur blossomed into fame. There was always so much of the child about her, and even when she was doing serious work she would suddenly start a tournament in the studio with her brothers, with maul-sticks for lances and palettes for shields, while little Juliette, decked out in all the old finery they could find, sat on the throne as the "fair lady," for whose sake the knights were engaged in deadly combat. It usually ended in broken easels and damaged canvases, and the knights ruefully returned to everyday life again in order to repair damages.

Perhaps it seemed as if fame came very suddenly and easily to Rosa Bonheur, but the preparation had been going on for many a long day. Those brown eyes of hers, with their quick alert look, had noticed and marked many things since the days when she played in the big garden at Bordeaux, and it was her love and patient study of animals that taught her how to draw them so faithfully.

But even then something else was needed.

The boat may be built and prepared with care, the

sail may be set on high, but unless a breeze comes to fill the sail the boat can make but little way. With all the young artist's love for her work, in spite of all the years of preparation, it needed, too, that heaven-sent gift, which is bestowed but never earned, the gift of genius.

JOHN COLERIDGE PATTESON

In the great hall of Camelot, where King Arthur held his court, the walls were decked with the shields of all his knights, set in three rows, from end to end. Some shields were carved with a coat of arms, some had their coats emblazoned with gold and colour, while others again were blank, having only the name of the knight written below.

It was easy, then, to see at a glance which knights stood highest in the king's esteem, for those who had done one noble deed had their arms carved upon their shields, those that had done more had their arms not only carved but emblazoned too, while those that had done nothing to deserve reward showed but a blank and empty shield.

In the hall of the Great King, where a shield is hung for each of us, inscribed beneath, each with its name, there may be many a name which the world delights to honour, yet which is written there beneath a shield all uncarved and unadorned, while some other name we scarcely know may shine there to mark a shield all inlaid with fairest colours and with purest gold.

Yet even here, seeing but dimly, at times we recognise some knightly deeds so noble, some life so great and pure, that we can almost see already the carving and emblazoning of the shield that hangs above the name of the true knight we honour, can almost hear

the welcome of the King, "Well done, good and faithful servant."

The story of the childhood of such great knights of God, even when their shields were still blank and empty, and the time of the carving had not yet come, is well worth the telling, for it was the time of preparation for their knightly deeds, the feeble tracing of the outline which was afterwards to be filled in and illuminated in crimson and gold.

So here is the story of the childhood of Bishop Patteson, Missionary and Martyr.

John Coleridge Patteson was born in London, at No. 7 Gower Street, Bedford Square, on the 1st of April 1827. His mother was the sister of the poet Coleridge, and to her first-born son was given her family name of Coleridge, as well as his father's name of John.

There were two little girls already in the nursery, one a stepsister, Joan, seven years old, and the other, Frances, or Fanny as she was called, only a year older than her baby brother. Two years later another little boy was born, so that made up a comfortable family of four, two boys and two girls.

The father, Sir John Patteson, was a judge, and to be the children of a judge meant having many pleasant changes, going from place to place in England and meeting many clever and brilliant people. The children were sure no one had ever such a delightful father as theirs, for with all his great cleverness he was full of fun, and loved to see them happy although he insisted on obedience and good behaviour.

But it was their mother who had most to do with the children's training when they were little, and the fair gentle lady needed all her firmness and strength of

mind in dealing with them, for they were by no means good, pattern children. Coleridge, or Coley as he was called, might look like a little cherub with his fair face and thoughtful dark-blue eyes, but he had a hot temper and a strong will, and he could be troublesome enough to try even the patience of a mother. He would try and see just how far he could go, and stubbornly refuse to give in until the last moment, although he knew that his mother was extremely firm, and always insisted on being obeyed in the end.

But if Coley was troublesome he was very affectionate too, and as soon as the battle was over, he was eager to say, "I will be good." Only that was not enough for his mother. She waited until she saw that he was really sorry, and she never allowed his easy promise to save him from the punishment he deserved.

What was the use of saying "I will be good," after he had flown into a passion and attacked his little sister Fanny and stabbed her arm with a sharp pencil? Fanny of course had been also to blame, for she had been teasing him, but that was no excuse for a boy to be so unmanly as to hurt his sister. So in spite of his repentance Coley was soundly whipped, and bore it manfully, while Fanny wept enough for two.

But although the mother had to rebuke and punish she was also the children's best playfellow, and was always ready to share all the fun and jokes of the nursery. None of the children could bear to vex their mother, their first thought being to spare her any worry. Once, when they were at Oxford, little Fanny had the misfortune to put her foot through a pane of glass.

"Oh! mamma!" she cried, "I did not mean to be an expense to you."

Whereupon Coley brought out three shillings, all his little store, and put it into her hand to pay for the damage.

Even by the time he was five years old Coley began to control his temper and to overcome his childish faults. On his fifth birthday, as he was now able to read, his father gave him a Bible, and this he read most eagerly. Some things puzzled him sorely, though, and grown-up people so seldom answered his questions.

"What happened to all the fish during the flood?" he asked, but never could get a satisfactory answer. He loved Isaiah best, and declared that his first sermon should be on the fifty-third chapter. For by this time he had quite made up his mind what he meant to be.

"I shall be a clergyman," he told his mother, "and make people happy by saying the Absolution."

Although the Bible was so well read, it was never carelessly treated, and the little hands that turned the pages must have been always reverent and careful, for it was this same little Bible that was used twenty-seven years later when he was consecrated as Bishop.

Other books might fare badly at his hands, for he was not at all a model boy, being as careless and thoughtless as most children are, disliking all lessons and loving his games, but he always treated holy things with thoughtful reverence, and tried to teach his little brother to do so too.

"Think, Jimmy, think!" he used to say, when the child was kneeling at his nurse's knee, saying his prayers but most evidently intent on what was going on around him.

It was enough at first to plan to be a clergyman, and choose the texts for his sermons, but presently his

ideas grew bigger. There had been a terrible hurricane in the West Indies, where his uncle, the Bishop of Barbados, was stationed, and the account of the storm, and the adventures of the Bishop, thrilled him with excitement. "I will be a Bishop, and I will have a hurricane," he announced grandly.

But the bishopric and the hurricane were still in the dim future, and something much less exciting, and to his mind a great deal more trying, was to be endured in the present—he was to go to school.

A little boy of eight is apt to be very home-sick and miserable when he first leaves home, and Coley was sure he was never going to be happy again. Even the beautiful country around Ottery St. Mary and all the joys of out-of-door life were no joys to him; his one longing was to get away and be at home again.

"I can never be happy except in the holidays," he writes to his mother. "To think of you all makes me chry. I believe you will not mind that blot, for it was a tear just before that fell."

To "chry" certainly sounds much more dignified with the added *h*.

There was one little gleam of comfort in his hard lot, and that was the fact that his grandparents lived quite close to the school, and his Uncle Frank not far off at the Manor House. Whenever he was invited and could obtain leave he went off to see them, and it was a joy to leave school and all the boys behind for a while and feel almost as if he was at home again. Indeed it was such a joy to the lonely little home-sick boy that he was tempted once or twice to invent the invitations and obtain leave under false pretences.

Then came the terrible day when his wrong-doing

was discovered, and his Uncle Frank as well as the head master made him feel desperately sorry and ashamed of himself. He confessed at once when he was questioned, and was quite straightforward in his explanations of what he had been doing, but his Uncle Frank soon showed him how mean and cowardly he had been, and that hurt more than the punishment of being kept within bounds and allowed to pay no visits for a long time. In a letter to his father he tells how sorry he is, and what his Uncle Frank had threatened to do.

"He told me that if I ever told another falsehood he would that instant march me into school and ask Mr. Cornish to strip and birch me, and that if I followed the same course I did now, and did not amend it, if the birching did not do, he should not let me home for the holidays, but I will not catch the birching."

Coley did not catch that birching, and indeed never again needed anyone to remind him to be strictly truthful. His school report spoke well of his conduct, but had no great praise for his diligence at his lessons, and the masters were sure he could do much better if he would only try.

Coley was certainly not keen about his work, he had very little ambition where his lessons were concerned, and he was so much fonder of games and sports. He was a good cricketer, rode straight, and was so light and active that few could beat him at running. He was a thorough sportsman too, and never whimpered when he was hurt. When he broke his collar-bone, no one at home knew about it until afterwards when his mother's embrace made him wince, and he explained why he had not mentioned it.

"I did not like to make a fuss," he muttered shamefacedly.

Of course by that time he had learned to be very happy at school, in spite of his dismal forebodings, and he was a great favourite, for he was always so good-natured, and so ready to help anyone, with scarcely a thought for himself.

Never did a younger brother have a better protector than did Jimmy of the wandering prayers, when he arrived at Ottery St. Mary, to join Coley at school. Schoolboys are not fond of showing affection openly, but Coley saw to it that no one harmed or bullied his little brother, and guarded him carefully with a strong protecting love, hidden under a rough schoolboy manner.

The boys were not very long together at Ottery, for Coley was now nearly eleven and ready for a public school, so his next step onwards was his becoming an Eton boy.

It was still rather a hardship to go back to school after holidays spent at home, but on the whole Coley was thoroughly happy at Eton. His letters to his mother told of successes in his class as well as in games, and he wrote a long description of the young Queen Victoria when she came to attend some ceremony at Eton.

He had evidently paid great attention to her appearance and dress, that he might describe them to his mother. But there was one little adventure connected with the visit which he was rather shy of mentioning.

The boys had thronged around the royal carriage, all eager to show their loyalty, and little Patteson

was pushed forward in the crush until he became entangled in one of the carriage wheels. The Queen, with her usual presence of mind, leaned over and held out her hand, and the boy, by grasping it, was able to pull himself on to his feet again. He was so bewildered that he never thought of trying to thank her, and by the time he had recovered his wits the carriage had rolled on. But although he had shown no gratitude, the remembrance of that royal helping hand made his feeling of personal loyalty even stronger than it was before.

After that came another festive day, when the Queen passed through on her wedding trip, and Coley wrote a long description of the welcome given by the Eton boys. It must have been a day to remember! All the boys wore large bridal favours and white gloves (not very white by the end of the day), and it is difficult to say which part of it all Coley enjoyed most. His letter describes the joy of chasing the "clods" off the Long Walk wall, the tremendous cheering, and the final rush to the Castle.

"You may fancy we were rather hot, running all the way to the Castle, besides the exertion of knocking over the clods and knocking at doors as we passed; but I was so happy."

There was one more royal visit mentioned in his letters home, which was perhaps the one he enjoyed most of all. It was when King Louis Philippe visited Eton with the Queen, Prince Albert, and the Duke of Wellington, who was the idol of the boys. Coley describes the King and goes on to tell how the Duke of Wellington by some mistake fell behind the rest, and was hustled by the crowd, who did not recognise him.

"I was the first to perceive him," he writes, "and springing forward, pushed back the fellows on each side, who did not know whom they were tumbling against, and, taking off my hat, cheered with might and main."

The crowd took up the cheering, and in a moment the whole school surrounded the Duke, and as he stood alone in the middle of the boys, as Coley says, "I *rather* think we *did* cheer him."

The soldierly figure of the Iron Duke and his undemonstrative way of enduring admiration is well described.

"At last, giving about one touch to his hat, he began to move on, saying, 'Get on, boys, get on.' I never saw such enthusiasm here: the masters rushed into the crowd, waving their caps and shouting like any of us. As for myself I was half mad, and roared myself hoarse in about five minutes."

Perhaps all these excitements rather interfered with lessons, and Coley was as keen as ever about cricket and bathing and boating, but at any rate the lessons suffered. He had really tried to work, and it was a bitter disappointment when he found that he had not done as well as his masters expected of him. He more than held his own with the other boys, and that had quite satisfied him, but he had such splendid abilities that he should have done much better if only he had taken a real interest in his work. His sorrow over his shortcomings was very real, however, and he set to work at once with all his might, that he might have a better report to send home. Great was his joy when he was able to write news of a brilliant success.

"I am so splitting with joy, you cannot think," he writes, "because now I have given you some proof that I have been lately sapping, and doing pretty well."

His wish to become a clergyman, which he had announced when he was five years old, had never changed, but now when he was fourteen the wish began to grow into a steady purpose, and that purpose was fixed by two sermons which he heard preached at Windsor.

He had grown up but slowly, and there was still much of the child about him, but he was gradually leaving the little boy behind him and becoming more of a man. Besides this, he was looking forward to his confirmation, and that alone was enough to make him more steady and thoughtful.

The New Windsor Parish Church was crowded to overflowing on the Sunday when two great missionary sermons were preached by Archbishops Wilberforce and the newly-made Bishop of New Zealand. The boys could not all find seats, and so many of them stood throughout both morning and evening services, listening with the keenest interest. The new bishop was an old friend, for he had been curate at Windsor, and the thought of the warfare he was setting out to wage, and of the perils to be met, filled them all with enthusiasm.

Among those listening lads stood young Patteson, drinking in every word.

"The abundance of the sea shall be converted unto thee, the forces of the Gentiles shall come unto thee." The text rang in his ears like a call to battle, and the echoes never died away.

The evening sermon was another trumpet-call to the boys to give of their best, and to furnish the "nerves and sinews" for the warfare of the Master under whose banner they were all enrolled. They were told that even the smallest offering of real self-sacrifice would be acceptable, and would be a power in the great work of the Church.

Out on the green slopes of the hills above Galilee there had once gathered a crowd of hungry listeners, and the Master's direction, "Give ye them to eat," seemed to the disciples a command that it was impossible to obey. Only one little lad pressed forward willing to give all that he had, although it was so small; and that offering in the Master's hands was sufficient to feed the multitude.

So in that great crowded church again a little lad stood ready with his offering, the gift of his life and service, and again the Master's hand was ready to receive the gift.

"Lady Patteson," said the Bishop, before he left for New Zealand, when he was saying good-bye, "will you give me Coley?"

The boy's mother started, she had never thought of this. The carving on the knightly shield must often first be traced in lines of pain and self-sacrifice upon some other heart.

She did not answer then, but afterwards, when she found that her boy's heart was set upon it, she told him that, if he kept to his purpose, when the time came he should have her consent and blessing.

Together the mother and son talked of the future, and she was proud to think she was offering her best. She was willing to let him go, and she bade

her young knight prepare himself for the fight; but they did not know that when the time should come for him to set forth, other hands would buckle on his armour.

The boy stood at her side, his eyes shining with eagerness, and his heart beating high with the hope of doing good service for the King. His shield should some day bear his arms and show the record of a knightly deed, but they did not guess that there would be blazoning too, and that the colours should shine with the crimson of the martyr's dye, when the faithful knight should lay down his life in his Master's service.

SIR JOHN EVERETT MILLAIS

In the story of the childhood of famous men and women, we seldom find the things we look for and would expect to find there. If we might invent the stories ourselves, they would, in most cases, be very different from the real accounts. But now and again we come across the record of a childhood which fits exactly with our ideas of what it should have been, and the story of the childhood of John Everett Millais is one of these. The famous painter began steadily from his earliest years to tread the road from which his feet never wandered. The golden thread which ran through all his life he grasped while still but a child, and it led him on without break or tangle to the goal of his ambition.

It was at Southampton that John Millais was born on the 9th of June 1829, but it was at St. Heliers in Jersey that he spent the first happy years of his childhood. His father, John William Millais, was descended from an old Norman family that had lived for generations on the island, and St. Heliers was an ideal home for children. Here John and his elder brother William, and their sister Emily, played amongst the rocks to their hearts' content, catching sand-eels and crabs, poking about in the clear pools, and carrying home all sorts of treasures to fill baths and

basins. It was rather a trial to their mother's patience, for she would much rather that the treasures had been left on the shore, and John, who was only four years old, was not a strong child, and she was anxious when he escaped from her care, and went to search for his beloved sea-beasts and sea-weeds. However she soon found that the best way to keep him safe and happy, and out of mischief, was to let him have a pencil and paper on which to draw pictures.

John loved fishing off the pier and hunting in the pools, but he loved drawing pictures best of all. With a pencil and some scraps of paper he was perfectly happy, and he was never tired of drawing birds and butterflies, and anything else that caught his fancy. Lying flat on the ground, he covered his paper with all sorts of figures and animals, and very soon other people besides his mother began to notice his drawings and to think them extremely clever.

"Mark my words, that boy will be a very great man some day, if he lives," said one of his uncles, after looking at his nephew's work.

John was not a difficult child to manage at home. He was frank and truthful and very affectionate, but he always found it difficult to keep to rules, and it was impossible to drive him by force to do anything he had made up his mind not to do. It was his mother who taught him his lessons and gave him all the help he needed, and only once was the attempt made to send him to school.

That school was certainly not a success, and he had been there only two days when he was sent home in dire disgrace. Some rule had been broken,

and the master declared that John should have a thrashing to teach him to keep the rules another time. But John did not see the justice of this, and before the thrashing began he turned round quickly and bit the master's hand. Of course he was sent home at once, and told he need not come back any more after such disgraceful behaviour.

Now John ought to have been very unhappy, and perhaps he was a good deal ashamed of that bite, but as far as school was concerned he was overjoyed to hear that he need not go back. To do lessons with his mother was quite a different thing altogether. With her to teach him he loved his lessons, instead of hating them with all his heart. "I owe everything to my mother," he used to say, when his childhood's days were past and he remembered all her love and patience with her little boy.

When John was about six years old there came a delightful and interesting change in his life, for the family went to live at Dinan in Brittany, and the children were charmed with all the new sights and sounds. There were many kinds of new things for John to draw, and greatest of all delights was the sight of the regiments of French soldiers as they marched through the town on their way to or from Brest. John loved the grand buildings and all the beautiful things his mother pointed out to him, but he was fascinated by those gorgeous French uniforms.

In the Place du Gruxlin there was a bench from which the two boys could watch the roll-call and see the soldiers above the heads of the crowd, and they never failed to be there when they heard the drums beating and the sound of marching feet. John of course always

had his sketch-books with him, ready to draw all he could see.

He was working away one day, anxious to finish the portrait of a very smart drum-major in all the glory of his gold trappings, bearskin, and gold-headed cane, when two of the officers crept up silently behind the bench and stood watching what he was doing. They said nothing until the portrait was finished, and then suddenly clapped him on the back and cried "Bravo!" They were so much astonished at the child's clever drawing that they insisted on tipping him, and then returned with the boy to his home, as they wished to be introduced to his father and mother.

"The child should be sent at once to study in Paris," they declared, feeling sure they had discovered a genius.

The sketch of the drum-major was carried off by them to the barracks and there shown with great pride to the other officers. No one, however, would believe that it could be the work of a child of six, and bets began to be freely taken about it, while one of the two officers started off post-haste to fetch little John to prove their words.

It was very frightening to be carried off by the strange soldier-man and taken to the barracks all alone, and John went in fear and trembling, but as soon as he got there and was given a pencil and a sheet of paper he forgot to be afraid or shy, and began at once to draw a portrait of the colonel smoking a big cigar. It turned out to be a most excellent likeness, and the other officers were so delighted as well as astonished that they willingly paid their bet, which was the cost of a good dinner.

After two years at Dinan the family returned once

more to St. Heliers, and there John began his first lessons in drawing, but his master, Mr. Bessel, soon told the boy's parents that there was nothing more he could teach John, and he advised them to take their little son up to London. It would be wiser to go at once to the President of the Royal Academy, and ask his advice as to what should be done with the young genius.

Now the President of the Royal Academy had often been asked to look at the drawings of promising children, and he was not at all encouraging when John and his parents were shown in, and he heard what they had to say.

"Better make him a chimney-sweep than an artist," he said. He had seen so many young men try to paint pictures who would have been much better employed sweeping chimneys.

However, the great man said he would look at the child's sketches, and he evidently expected to see the usual kind of work, which so often only seems wonderful in the parents' eyes.

But when the sketches were produced and laid before him, he suddenly sat straight up and his eyes grew quite round with astonishment. He looked from the sketches to the little fellow standing there, and seemed to find it impossible to believe that such small childish hands could have produced such masterly work. Would John draw something here and now, he asked, that he might look on and judge?

There was no difficulty about that. John set himself promptly to work and began a drawing of the fight between Hector and Achilles. The president could scarcely believe his own eyes. He was sorry he had talked about chimney-sweeping, and he handsomely

apologised. Here was one of the few exceptions to his rule, and he strongly advised the boy's parents to have him trained to be an artist.

So it was settled that John should begin to work at once to draw from the cast in the British Museum, and after a short time, when he was nine years old, a place was found for him in the Academy of Art, the best school known at that time, kept by Henry Sars, a portrait-painter.

The small boy with his delicate face, long fair curling hair, holland blouse and turned-down frilled collar, was rather unlike the rest of the art students, and he was an easy victim for the bullying of the bigger boys. His fondness for work, his extreme diligence and wonderful talent were added aggravations to the other pupils, and one big hulking lazy fellow took a special delight in torturing the child.

Little Millais' life was made a burden to him by this big bully, and it only grew worse and worse as time went on. They both had entered the competition for the silver medal of the Society of Arts, and when it was known that John had carried off the prize, although he was only nine years old, his big rival was furious.

The very next day the bully sat in the studio watching like a great spider in a web for the arrival of the small boy, and biding his time until all the other pupils were gone, he seized on the defenceless little boy and began to take his cruel revenge.

In spite of his struggles, Millais was hung head downwards out of the window and his legs were fastened securely with scarves and pieces of string to the iron bar of the window-guard. The child very soon

became unconscious, and would most likely have died had not some passers-by in the street below noticed the hanging figure, and given the alarm by ringing the street door-bell.

After that the bully was seen no more at the Academy, and Millais was left in peace.

The prize day at the Society of Arts was a red-letter day in the life of John Millais, for he was to receive his silver medal from the hands of his Royal Highness the Duke of Sussex. Dressed in a "white plaid tunic, with black belt and buckle; short white frilled trousers showing bare legs, with white socks and patent-leather shoes; a large white frilled collar, a bright necktie, and his hair in golden curls," he walked up when the secretary called out his name, "Mr. John Everett Millais."

There was a pause. The Duke, who stood behind a high raised desk, saw no one to whom he was to hand the medal, and waited for the prize-winner to appear.

"The gentleman is a long time coming up," he said at last to the secretary.

"He is here, your Royal Highness," replied the secretary, and looking down over the desk, sure enough the Duke saw that the gentleman was standing there, but such a very little gentleman he was, that his golden head did not reach to the level of the top of the desk.

A stool was then brought, and standing upon it the winner of the silver medal could be seen more clearly, and the Duke patted his head and wished him every success.

"Remember, if at any time I can be of service to you, you must not hesitate to write and say so," he added kindly.

That was a lucky promise for John, and it was not very long before he claimed the promised favour. Both he and William were very keen on fishing, and they had fished every year together in the Serpentine and Round Pond, until permission was withdrawn. Then John remembered the Duke's promise, and wrote to ask if they might not be allowed to fish there as usual, and the request was granted at once. After that the pleasure was all the greater, for they were the envy of all the other little boys, who were only allowed to look on.

William was only two years older than John, and they always were together as much as possible, although William went to school and John still did his lessons with his mother. Both boys were "mad about art," and "knew every picture in the National Gallery by heart." One of their plays was to make a National Gallery of their own, out of a large deal box, the pictures hung therein being about the size of a visiting-card or a good-sized envelope.

All the old masters were hung there. There were Rembrandts, Titians, Rubens, Turners, &c., all with most gorgeous frames made out of the shining paper of crackers, and all carefully varnished to look like oil paintings.

It was a good thing that little Millais was child enough to play at such games, for in other ways he was so much older than his years, and he was getting on so quickly with his work, that it seemed as if he had already left his childhood behind him. He was only ten when he was admitted to be a student of the Royal Academy, "the youngest student who ever found entrance within its walls, and during his six

years there he carried off in turn every honour the Academy had to bestow."

So the golden thread led onwards, and the boy never loosed his hold upon it nor strayed into other paths. Little John Millais, "the child" of the Royal Academy, went steadily forward until he became Sir John Millais, its famous president.

LOUISA ALCOTT

Of the four "Little Women" in that book which we all love, it is generally "Jo" who is the greatest favourite. She is such a real person to us, and we seem to know her so intimately that it is not at all surprising to learn that she did not only live between the covers of a book, but was a real live person and lived a real life in this world of ours. Only her name was really Louisa Alcott and not Jo March, and the story she wrote about Jo and Meg, Beth and Amy, was, with a few alterations, the story of herself and her three sisters, Anna, Elizabeth, and May. Her story, as we know, begins when "Jo" was almost grown up, so there is a great deal more to be told about her when she was a little girl.

Louisa Alcott was born in Germastown, Pennsylvania, on the 29th of November 1832. She was the second "little woman" born into the Alcott family, but she had quite as warm a welcome as the first, and both father and mother were proud to have another daughter.

From the very first Louisa was quite a credit to the family. She was such a strong, healthy baby, and such an extremely good one.

"The prettiest, best little thing in the world" was the verdict of one of their friends. "It has a fair complexion, dark bright eyes, long dark hair, a high

forehead, and altogether a countenance of more than usual intelligence."

Perhaps as a tiny baby Louisa may have deserved to be called "the best in the world," but certainly as soon as she could toddle about by herself, and her energetic little feet began to carry her into all sorts of adventures, she could scarcely be considered such a model of goodness.

She was but a baby of two years when the Alcott family moved to Boston, and by that time she was quite an independent little maiden. She and Anna were carefully dressed in nice clean nankeen frocks for the journey, which was to be made by steamboat, and they looked the very picture of sweetness and good behaviour.

In the bustle and excitement of settling on board, however, no one at first noticed that the baby had disappeared, and when an anxious search was made it was some time before she could be found. When at last they looked into the engine-room, there sat the truant, as dirty as a little tinker and as happy as a queen, watching the engines and having "a beautiful time."

Those energetic feet of hers and her inquiring mind led her into a good deal of mischief, and she was never tired of trying to run away. Sometimes she was caught and brought back before she had strayed very far, but one day she escaped unnoticed and spent a long happy day wandering about with some Irish children with whom she had made friends. They played about the common together and dug in the dust-heaps, and when she was hungry the children shared with her their store of cold potatoes, salt fish, and crusts.

It was all most delightful until evening came on, and then Louisa suddenly began to think about home and to wish she could find her way back. It was so easy to run away, but not nearly so easy to return. At last, when the other children left her, she gave it up and sat down on a doorstep close to a big friendly dog that allowed her to cuddle up close to him and lay her tired head on his curly back. She watched the lamplighter going his rounds and the lights begin to twinkle in the streets, and then she fell fast asleep and slept soundly until the town-crier came round with his bell.

"Lost, stolen, or strayed," he cried, "a little girl, in a pink frock, white hat, and new green shoes."

"Why, dat's me," said a small voice from the doorstep as Louisa sat up and rubbed her eyes, smiling a very sleepy smile.

She did not at all like to be parted from the dear curly dog, but the crier carried her off to his house and gave her a most delicious supper of bread and treacle on a tin plate with the alphabet round it.

So far the adventure had been nothing but pure pleasure, but the fun came to an end the next day when the runaway found herself tied to the arm of the sofa, with plenty of time to sit still and repent.

She had not meant to be naughty. The world was so full of interesting things, and she loved to make friends with everybody.

"I love everybody in dis whole world," she had declared with a beaming smile one morning at breakfast, and the little Irish children had only come in for their share.

That dinner of cold fish and potatoes must have been

a real treat to Louisa, for at home she seldom had anything to eat but plain boiled rice without sugar and some kind of porridge. Her father never ate meat, and the children were not allowed to have it either. It was no wonder that they sometimes grew very tired of plain rice and porridge and longed for something more tasty. Great indeed was their joy when a kind old lady came to stay at a hotel close by, and used to save up her pies and cakes in a bandbox ready to carry over to the children.

Years afterwards, when Louisa had become a famous authoress, she met the old lady again and went up joyfully to greet her.

"Why, I did not think you would remember me," said the old friend.

"Do you think I shall ever forget that bandbox?" said Louisa Alcott, smiling reproachfully at her.

Occasionally on birthdays or some such special occasion the children were allowed a cake, and birthdays were a great event in the family.

Louisa on her fourth birthday held quite a reception in her father's schoolroom. It was like being a queen to have a crown of flowers on her head and to stand on the table and hand each scholar a plummy cake as they passed. But, sad to say, the supply of cakes ran short, and the little queen found that if she gave each child a cake there would be none left over for herself. That did not seem at all fair, for, after all, was she not the chief person on her own birthday? So Louisa held the last cake tight in her hand and refused to part with it.

Her mother, who was looking on, came and whispered in her ear.

"It is always better to give away than to keep the

nice things," she said. "So I know my Louey will not let the little friend go without."

It was hard to part with the "dear plummy cake," but Louisa handed it over to the waiting child, and somehow, when her mother kissed her, she felt happier than any plum-cake had ever made her feel.

That school, kept by Louisa's father, was never a very successful one, and before very long it was given up, and the family left Boston again and went to live in a country house in Concord.

It was a delightful change for the children. They loved the cottage and the garden full of trees, and they had besides a large barn which they were allowed to use as a playroom.

All the little Alcotts were fond of acting and dressing up. They had found their way early into Make-Believe Land, and now the old empty barn was the very place for them to act their plays and pretending games. The little Emersons and Hawthornes who lived in the neighbourhood came to help, and together they acted the *Pilgrim's Progress*, *Jack and the Beanstalk*, and all the stories they knew.

Lessons were carefully done, though, before play began, and every morning the children went to their father's study for several hours. Louisa tells us those hours were very pleasant ones, for her father never crammed them with learning but taught in the wisest, pleasantest way. She says, "I never liked arithmetic, nor grammar, and dodged those branches on all occasions, but reading, writing, composition and geography I enjoyed, as well as the stories read to us."

No one could tell stories as her father did, for he was certainly a wonderful story-teller.

Besides the lessons in the study there was a share of housework for each little girl to do, and plenty of needlework too. Anna had made a whole shirt most beautifully when she was ten years old, and Louisa tells us, "At twelve I set up as a doll's dressmaker, with my sign out and wonderful models in my window. All the children employed me, and my turbans were the rage at one time, to the great dismay of the neighbours' hens, who were hotly hunted down that I might tweak out their downiest feathers to adorn the dolls' headgear."

Yet in spite of housework and sewing Louisa was certainly inclined to be a tomboy, and her greatest delight was always to be out of doors, running about the fields and woods, climbing trees and racing with the other children.

"I always thought I must have been a deer or a horse in some former state," she says, "because it was such a joy to run. No boy could be my friend till I had beaten him in a race, and no girl if she refused to climb trees, leap fences, and be a tomboy."

Her wise mother allowed Louisa to run about as much as she liked, for she wanted her to grow up strong in body as well as in mind, and believed that Nature could teach her some of the best lessons. Indeed the child never forgot those things which she learned out in the woods, under the open sky, and one morning she suddenly learned the greatest lesson of all.

She had been running over the hills very early in the morning, before the dawn began to break, and had thrown herself down to rest in the quiet woods, watching for the sun to rise. Through an arch of trees she saw the light begin to flush the sky and the spell of

morning to touch the hills and river and wide green meadows below, till the grey veil of shadows was turned into a golden haze.

She had often watched a sunrise before, but she had never before felt all the beauty and wonder of it, and the certainty that God was there, very near to her. The little pilgrim had caught a real glimpse of the Celestial City, and it was a vision that never faded.

The happy days at Concord in the woods and garden and old barn came to an end when Louisa was ten years old, and once more the family moved to a new home, this time to a farm called "Fruitlands," at Harvard. Here their father helped to start quite a new kind of life, with some other people who shared his ideas. They were all to live together and have everything in common, and no one was to buy or sell or make money. It was quite like a picnic at first, and the children thoroughly enjoyed themselves. This is how Louisa describes the journey to "Fruitlands": "On the first day of June 1843 a large waggon, drawn by a small horse, and containing a motley load, went lumbering over certain New England hills, with the pleasing accompaniments of wind, rain, and hail. A serene man with a serene child upon his knee was driving, or rather being driven, for the small horse had it all his own way. . . . Behind them was an energetic-looking woman, with a benevolent brow, satirical mouth, and eyes brimful of hope and courage. A baby reposed on her lap, a mirror leaned against her knee, and a basket of provisions danced at her feet, as she struggled with a large, unruly umbrella. Two blue-eyed little girls, with hands full of childish treasures, sat under an old shawl, chattering happily together. . . . The wind whistled over

the bleak hills, the rain fell in a despondent drizzle, and night began to fall. But the calm man gazed as tranquilly into the fog as if he beheld a radiant bow of promise spanning the grey sky. The cheery woman tried to cover every one but herself with the big umbrella. The little girls sang lullabies to their dolls in soft, maternal murmurs. Thus these modern pilgrims journeyed out of the old world to found a new one in the wilderness. . . . The prospective Eden at present consisted of an old red farmhouse, a dilapidated barn, many acres of meadow-land, and a grove."

No one was to eat anything but grain and fruits and roots at "Fruitlands," and they were to wear no woollen garments, for that would have meant robbing the sheep, and it was even suggested that no one should wear shoes, because the leather was made from the skins of animals. Here, however, the children's mother took a firm stand, and she refused to allow her little daughters to go barefoot.

The children were happy enough in their new home, for although they had to do their share of hard work, they were left free at other times to run about out of doors, which was what they loved. They all kept their diaries, and in hers Louisa gives a picture of their daily life.

"I rose at five and had my bath. I love cold water! Then we had our singing-lesson with Mr. Lane. After breakfast I washed dishes and ran on the hill till nine, and had some thoughts—it was so beautiful up there. Did my lessons—wrote and spelt and did sums. . . . Father asked us what was God's noblest work. Anna said *men*, but I said *babies*. Men are often bad; babies never are. We had a long talk and I felt better after

it. . . . We had bread and fruit for dinner. I read and walked and played till supper-time."

There was only one other lady at "Fruitlands" besides the children's mother, but she did very little to help with the work. She gave the children music-lessons which they did not like at all. Louisa writes in her diary:

"I had a music-lesson with Miss P. I hate her, she is so fussy. I ran in the wind and played be a horse and had a lovely time in the woods with Anna and Lizzie. We were fairies, and made gowns and paper wings, I 'flied' the highest of all." She goes on afterwards to tell the story of the day when Mr. Emerson and Miss Fuller came to visit them, and how the guests had a long conversation with their father and mother on the subject of education.

"Well, Mr. Alcott," said Miss Fuller at length, "you have been able to carry out your methods in your own family, and I should like to see your model children."

The visitors were standing talking on the doorstep, and just then a tremendous uproar was heard close at hand, and round the corner of the house dashed a queer procession. Anna was wheeling a wheelbarrow in which sat baby May crowned like a queen. Louisa was harnessed as a horse, and Elizabeth ran barking at the side pretending to be a dog. The shouts ceased suddenly when the children caught sight of the visitors, and the horse in her surprise stumbled and fell, bringing wheelbarrow and baby and driver down in a heap. Mrs. Alcott turned to Miss Fuller with a smile.

"Here are the model children," she said.

Louisa had always longed to have a room of her very own, and at last when she was thirteen her wish

was granted. Again she writes, "I have at last got the little room I have wanted so long, and am very happy about it. It does me good to be alone, and mother has made it very pretty and neat for me. My work-basket and desk are by the window, and my closet is full of dried herbs that smell very nice. The door that opens into the garden will be very pretty in summer, and I can run off to the woods when I like.

"I have made a plan for my life, as I am in my teens and no more a child. I am old for my age, and don't care much for girls' things. People think I am wild and queer, but mother understands and helps me. I have not told anyone about my plan, but I'm going to *be* good. I've made so many good resolutions, and written sad notes, and cried over my sins, but it doesn't seem to do any good. Now I'm going to work really, for I feel a true desire to improve, and be a help and comfort, not a care and sorrow to my dear mother."

That plan for her life she carried out in spite of failures and difficulties, and worked manfully for the rest of the family, especially for the mother she loved so dearly. She had always been fond of writing stories and poems, as we know from her account of "Jo," but it was uphill work at first.

"Stick to your teaching, you can't write," was the advice given to her by a friend.

"I won't teach and I can write, and I'll prove it," said Louisa to herself.

How well she proved it we all know, and very thankful we are that she stuck to her guns, for what should we have done without our beloved book, *Little Women.*

CHARLES GEORGE GORDON

It was on a dark winter's day in January 1833 that Charles George Gordon was born at No. 1 Kemp Terrace, Woolwich Common, and England was blessed by the birthday of one of the truest and noblest of her hero sons.

The name of Gordon already stood for loyalty and devotion to king and country. They were a race of soldiers, a brave, fierce, fighting race these Gordons, ready to pour out blood and treasure in defence of their country, and in the service of their king. The new-born baby had the blood of loyal and brave generations of soldiers in his veins, and a name of which to be proud.

Many a time, as his mother held her little son in her arms, she must have prayed that he would keep the precious inheritance of his fair name untarnished and hand it on with added honours. She could not guess that in English hearts his name was to be graven deeper than that of any other hero knight, that on England's roll of honour it was to shine as a beacon, kindling men's hearts into a flame of devoted admiration for this "Warrior of God."

Meanwhile the little child seemed a very ordinary kind of baby, and rather a poor specimen to come of such a warlike race. He was small and easily frightened by the noise which the cannon made,

although he heard it daily and should have grown accustomed to it. When he grew a little older, however, he began to show signs of being no commonplace child, but one with a very strong character, a wonderful amount of quiet determination and set purpose.

He was a merry, bright-faced, mischievous little lad, full of daring and fond of fun, but with an earnestness underneath which answered to his mother's training.

We know little of the first ten years of his life, which were spent at Corfu, where his father, General Gordon, held command, but the Duke of Cambridge remembered in after years having seen a small boy playing about there, a boy with a clever bright face, and this was Charlie Gordon. It was there, too, that the boy learned to swim in a way that showed him to be quite fearless and very enterprising. Instead of being fearful of going beyond his depth, Charlie used to fling himself into deep water and kick out alone, trusting always that someone would fish him out if he began to go under.

There were six girls and four boys besides Charlie in the Gordon family, so he had plenty of playfellows, and when they all returned to England to live at Woolwich there was no end to the gay times they had together. Two elder brothers left home to enter the army while Charlie was still a little boy, but there were quite enough young Gordons left to get into mischief and enjoy all kinds of adventures.

At Taunton, where Charlie was sent to school, he did not distinguish himself in any way at his lessons, although he liked making maps, and his drawing was

good. Books had no great charm for him, and he was much keener on all kinds of sports. He was so fond of fun and spent so much energy on games, that there was no time left to try and win a high place in his class.

It was in the holidays, however, that Charlie enjoyed his happiest times. The high spirits of the Gordon boys led them into all kinds of mischief, and no one ever knew what they would do next. They were great favourites at the Arsenal, where the workmen would often neglect their proper business on purpose to make splendid weapons for them. There were squirts which could wet an enemy through and through in a minute, cross-bows which could be used with a screw for a bolt, and many other things calculated to fill a boy's heart with pure joy.

How the door bells of the Woolwich houses used to ring in those holiday times, and how angry the servants used to be when they opened doors continually to find no one there and only the echo of flying feet to explain the bell-ringing. Sometimes, though, when a door stood open, Freddy, the youngest boy, would be pushed in first and the door held shut behind him while the bell was rung and he was left to face the angry servant, and make the best excuse he could.

During one of these holiday times, when other amusements failed, the Gordon boys thought of a brilliant new plan that kept them busy for a long time. Their house just then happened to be overrun with mice, and the boys set themselves diligently to catch as many as they could alive and unhurt. The house of the Commandant was just opposite, and as

soon as a sufficient number of mice were caught they were carried cautiously across the street, the Commandant's door was pushed gently open, and the prisoners set free to scamper in a wild crowd into their new home.

There was one adventure, however, which Charlie considered his "greatest achievement," and which he never forgot. This was a practical joke played upon the senior cadets or "Pussies" as they were called. These cadets were almost grown up and were not people to be trifled with, which made it all the more exciting, and it needed much courage and daring to meddle with them. Their lecture-hall was opposite the earthworks upon which they practised from time to time, and every inch of these earthworks was well known to Charlie and his brothers, who had many a time played hide-and-seek there.

Now one evening, when a professor was lecturing to the cadets in their hall, suddenly the most terrific noise was heard, as of a tremendous explosion which seemed to shatter every one of the windows at once. In an instant the cadets were all on their feet, and they swarmed out like bees disturbed in a hive. One glance was enough to show them that there had been no explosion, but that some mischievous persons had pelted the windows with small shot at a given signal all together. There was little doubt in the minds of the "Pussies" who these mischievous persons were, for Charlie Gordon and his brothers were never far to seek when mischief was afoot.

With one accord the cadets made for the earthworks, and there followed a most exciting chase. It was lucky indeed for the Gordon boys that they knew

the turnings so well and could run like the wind, for the "Pussies" were furiously angry and would have shown little mercy if they had caught the offenders. As it was, for a long time Charlie carefully avoided meeting any of them, and he always afterwards remembered that exciting hunt with a thrill of horror.

As soon as the school-days at Taunton came to an end, Charlie went to another school at Shooter's Hill to be coached for the army, and after a year there he passed into the Royal Military Academy at Woolwich.

If young Gordon did not make his mark in any of his classes, he certainly made it amongst his companions. He was born to be a leader of men, and even the schoolboys felt his influence. He may have led others into mischief, but he never tolerated any mean or underhand act, and he was as generous as he was truthful and upright in word and deed. He was a slightly built boy, not very tall, with curly hair and light blue eyes; eyes whose glance was as keen as a sharp sword, and which used sometimes to flash like blue fire.

"Gordon's eyes looked you through and through," said a little Soudan boy, years afterwards, and even at school those eyes saw straight through any mean disguise or base motive, and seemed to read the very heart of people. Any tale of distress set them aglow with deep compassion, and yet at other times they were the merriest eyes in all the world, brimming over with laughter.

A boy had only to look at Charlie Gordon to know that he could be trusted through thick and thin, and that he would never desert a friend.

Even after he entered the Academy, Gordon still got into trouble through his love of fun and practical

joking, but he always took his punishment like a man, and often bore more than his own share of the blame.

The cadets just then had got into a bad habit of rushing pell-mell out of the dining-hall, and crowding down the little narrow stair which led to it in an exceedingly rough and unseemly manner. To check this one day the senior corporal took his stand at the head of the stair as the cadets left the dining-hall, and stood there with outstretched arms to prevent the usual rush. The sight was too tempting a one for Charlie Gordon to resist. In an instant he lowered his head and charged forward, so that he butted the poor man straight in front and sent him flying backwards down the stairs and through the glass door beyond.

Luckily the corporal was not injured, and only his feelings were badly hurt; but it was natural that he should be very angry, and young Gordon came very near to being dismissed, while he lost all the good-conduct badges he had already won.

Although Gordon never grumbled over punishments which he knew that he deserved, it was a different matter when he felt that his honour was in any way called into question. When one day he was told by a superior that he would "never make an officer," he drew himself up proudly and tore the epaulets off his shoulders, throwing them at the feet of the officer who had reproached him so unjustly.

He might be over-fond of fun and be led into many scrapes, but he had a deep sense of the dignity and nobility of the service which he had entered.

To "Honour all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honour the King." These were the principles

which guided the life of Charles Gordon, and when at last, on that dark day in England's history when he stood alone face to face with death, deserted and betrayed, he had kept his boyish code of honour untarnished, pure and stainless, and had earned the right to be known for all time as the true example of "a very perfect knight."

THOMAS ALVA EDISON

It is not only in fairy tales that we meet the magician who with a word or a touch of his wand can turn darkness into light, carry messages like the wind, and make the commonplace things of everyday life wonderful. It is not only in fairyland that such magicians are born, for sometimes the dull old world produces just as wonderful a wizard as any that are to be found between the covers of Grimm or Hans Andersen.

In the little village of Milan, in the State of Ohio, not very many years ago Thomas Alva Edison was born. There was no mysterious romance about the birth of this magician. No one thought him very wonderful at all, except perhaps his mother, and even she found him only a tiresome boy at times. As to Alva's father, he thought the boy rather slow and stupid, and was quite worried about it. "Why, why, why," was on his lips from morning till night, and the number of questions he asked quite wore out his father's patience. He wanted to know the reason of everything and to prove for himself what was right and what was wrong.

Just like ordinary boys, he was always getting into mischief, but whether it was by magic or good luck he always managed to get out of it again. First of all he fell into the canal that ran past the house where

he lived, but he was pulled out before he was drowned. Then he tried falling into a pile of wheat in a grain lift, and was nearly smothered, but he managed to get out of that too. He had the top of one finger chopped off instead of the skate strap which he was holding, and when he tried to build a fire in a barn it was not surprising that the barn itself caught fire in the most ordinary way. There was nothing magical either in the punishment that followed, when he was publicly whipped in the village square as an example to other naughty boys.

And yet in Alva Edison's big head the magic was slowly working, although no one guessed it.

School had very little to do with helping on the magic, for the boy was only there three months, and all the time he sat at the foot of the class. "Al," as he was called, was a veritable dunce, and the teacher could make nothing of him. Perhaps, as usual, he asked too many questions, and very likely they were questions she could not answer.

But Alva's mother was vexed that her boy should be called stupid, and so she took him away from school and began to teach him herself. Down in the cellar he was allowed to keep rows upon rows of little bottles, collected from all parts of the town and filled with all sorts of chemicals, with which he made experiments, and each new discovery helped to add to the magic of his brain.

Sometimes, though, the experiments were a failure and the results far from pleasant.

"I will teach you to fly," he said one day to Michael Oates, a boy older than himself who helped with the work of the house.

Now Michael had a great admiration for Alva and quite believed he was able to do what he said, so when he was told to swallow a fearful dose of Seidlitz powders he took them without a murmur, believing that the gas they produced would hoist him up.

But alas! instead of flying he was soon lying on the ground twisted with pain, and his cries of agony brought Alva's mother to the rescue, and she brought out the switch which was kept behind the old grandfather's clock and whipped the experimenter soundly.

But neither the failure of the experiment nor the whipping discouraged Alva greatly. He was sure the idea was all right and it was only Michael who was all wrong.

There was not much money to spare in Alva's home, and all those bottles and experiments cost a good deal, so before very long, when he was only twelve years old, he made up his mind to try to earn money for himself.

First he tried market gardening with Michael (who could dig if he could not fly), and he grew and sold vegetables for a while, but he did not like the work. Then after much persuasion his mother allowed him to sell newspapers on the railway, and that suited him much better. He had time to read the newspapers and magazines as well as to sell them, and as he went backwards and forwards in the train from Huron, where he now lived, to Detroit, he was allowed to use one of the vans for his beloved experiments, and here he collected all his bottles and worked away as he had done in the cellar at home. Even that was not enough to keep him busy, and when the Civil War broke out and everyone wanted news, he started a little printing-

press in the van, and printed a newspaper of his very own called *The Weekly Herald,* which he sold at "three cents a copy."

But, sad to relate, an accident happened to the new laboratory, and it and the printing-press came to an untimely end. The train was running along a badly-laid track one day, when it gave a sudden lurch, and before Alva could catch it, a stick of phosphorus fell from the shelf on to the floor of the van, and in an instant the boards were in flames. The guard, a Scotchman with a quick temper, managed to put the fire out and save his van, but he was furious with the boy, and boxed his ears so soundly that Alva ever afterwards suffered from deafness. Then as soon as the first station was reached the bottles and the printing-press were bundled out on to the platform, and he was left there, "tearful and indignant," in the midst of the ruins.

It was after this that the magician began the work that was to touch the whole world with magic. And this is how his chance came. He was standing one day talking to the stationmaster at a little railway station, when he saw a tiny boy, the son of the station agent, go wandering along the rails on which a train was coming swiftly along. There was not a moment to be lost, and in the flash of an instant Alva had jumped down and caught the child just as the train dashed past, and only just in time, for the wheel of one of the passing carriages struck his heel. The child's father was not rich enough to reward the boy with money, but instead he offered to teach him telegraphy, and so the magic wand was put into the boy's hand.

Tiny wires that bind the world together, that carry

voices and messages through the silent air, fairy boxes filled with music and the sound of voices once breathed in and kept enchained for ever—are not these the work of a magician as wonderful as any that has ever lived in Fairy Tale?

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON

"My tea is nearly ready, and the sun has left the sky;
It's time to take the window and see Leerie going by;
For every night at tea-time and before you take your seat,
With lantern and with ladder he comes posting up the street."

"WHAT luck it is to have a lamp before our very own door," thought little Louis Stevenson as he stood by the nursery window to watch for the lamplighter.

One by one the lamps along Howard Place were touched into points of light, until the lamplighter reached No. 8, and then came the crowning joy of all, when Leerie stopped to light that special lamp. Would he look up and see the small face pressed against the window, and nod "good evening," or would he be too busy to think of little boys?

It was no wonder that the coming of the lamplighter was so eagerly looked for! The winter days were often long and wearisome to the little child shut up in the nursery there, and everything he could see from his window was interesting and exciting.

Louis, or "Smout" as his father called him, was so often ill, and caught cold so easily in the bitter cold Edinburgh winds, that he was often kept indoors the whole winter through, and all that he saw of the outside world was through his nursery window. They were happy days indeed when he was well enough to

play about the nursery, to lie flat on the floor chalking and painting his pictures, and to watch for Leerie when the gloaming came. But there were many other days spent in bed, when Louis was obliged to make-believe a good deal to keep himself happy, as he sat up with a little shawl pinned round his shoulders and his toys arranged on the counterpane beside him.

It was all very well to make-believe in the daytime, when he could drill his soldiers and sail his ships and build his cities on "the pleasant land of counterpane," but when night came on it was weary work to lie long hours awake with a cough that hurt, dreaming half-waking dreams of wild terrors that were worst of all.

The wintry winds shrieked as they swept past, thumping at the window and howling away into the distance, and they sounded to the shivering child like a horseman galloping up into the town, thundering past with jingling spurs in fearful haste on some dreadful errand, only to turn and gallop back again with the same mysterious haste. Louis in his little bed, shaken with terrified sobs, said his prayers over and over again, and longed for the morning to come. It was so difficult to be brave when the night was so dark and he was so full of aches and pains.

But there was always someone at hand ready to comfort the child through those long dreadful hours. His nurse, Alison Cunningham, "Cummie" as he called her, never failed him. She was always there to drive away the terrors and soothe the pain, always patient and always gentle with the poor little weary boy. His nurseries changed first to Inverleith Row and then to No. 17 Heriot Row, but Cummie was always there. She was his sure refuge from terrors at night and the

sharer of his joys by day; the feeling of "her most comfortable hand" he never forgot. Sometimes on those long watchful nights, when his wide-open eyes began to see fearful shapes, he would ask:

> "Why is the room so gaunt and great?
> Why am I lying awake so late?"

She would wrap a blanket round him and carry him over to the window, where he could look across the dark trees of the gardens beneath and see a few lights shining in the windows of the houses in Queen Street opposite. Safe in her arms, no shadows could touch him, and together they gravely discussed the question as to whether the lights meant that another wee laddie was awake watching with his nurse for the morn to come.

"When will the carts come in?" was the question always on his lips those weary nights. For the coming of the carts always meant that daybreak was at hand and the world was astir once more.

> "Out in the city sounds begin,
> Thank the kind God, the carts come in!
> An hour or two more, and God is so kind,
> The day shall be blue in the window blind."

But it was not only Cummie who watched over and cared for little Louis, there were his father and his mother too. Often during the night the nursery door would open gently, and his father would come in and sit by his bedside and tell him story after story, until the child forgot his pain and weariness and drifted away into the land of dreams. His father's tales always had

a special charm for him and helped him through one terrible hour which he never forgot. He had been left alone in a room and by mistake had locked himself in, and then was unable to unlock the door. Evening was coming on, all his terrors of the dark began to gather round as the shadows crept nearer.

> "All the wicked shadows coming tramp, tramp, tramp,
> With the black night overhead."

But his father was close at hand, and his voice came through the keyhole talking about such delightful, interesting things that Louis held his breath to listen and quite forgot the shadows and the darkness until the locksmith arrived to open the door.

Then there was his young mother, "my jewelest of mothers" as he called her, who was so ready to play with him and who always made even the dull nursery a sunshiny, happy place. She was not very strong, and Louis began early to try to take care of her. One day when he was only three years old, he was left alone with her after dinner and remembered that Cummie always wrapped a shawl about her; there was no shawl to be found, but he reached up and took a d'oyley off the table, carefully unfolded it, and spread it over as much of her as it would cover.

"That's a wee bittie, mama," he said comfortingly.

Cummie was very strict about Sunday, but his "jewelest of mothers" had a way of overcoming the difficulty, and if he promised to play nothing but the "Pilgrim Progress" game she sewed a patch on the back of one of his wooden figures, and lo! there was Christian, ready to flee from the City of Destruction, with all his exciting adventures ahead.

There was of course the Shorter Catechism to be learned, and there was no way of avoiding that, but afterwards came long chapters out of the Bible which Louis loved to listen to, and Cummie would read parts of the old writings of the Covenanters, and everything she read to him she managed to make most interesting. Louis himself learned to repeat long passages out of the Bible, besides Psalms and hymns, and he always recited them with a great deal of action, his small hands scarcely ever still, and his dark eyes shining with excitement.

With mother and Cummie to amuse him all day long, he was rather like a small prince in the nursery, and it was his will and pleasure that someone should constantly read to him. He never could listen quietly to any story, but must always try to act it, slaying dragons, attacking the enemy, galloping off on a fiery horse to carry news to the enemy, until he was tired out, and Cummie would smooth back the hair from his hot forehead, and try to persuade him to rest.

"Sit down and bide quiet for a bittie," she said, and coaxed him to sew a piece of his kettle-holder, or knit the garter that was as black as only a child's grimy little hands could make it.

When spring came it brought new life to little Louis, and the long nights of pain and cold winter days were forgotten, as he played about the garden of his grandfather's manse at Colinton. Like the flowers, he began to lift up his head and grow strong in the sunshine. It was a different world to him when the sun shone and the sky was blue, and the splendid colours of the flowers made his days a rainbow riot of delight. There was no more lying in

bed, no more coughs and wakeful nights, but instead, long warm summer days spent in the garden, or down by the river, where there was the joy of Louis's heart—a mill.

There were cousins there too, in the sunny garden, ready to play all the games that Louis invented, to lie behind the bushes with toy guns watching for a drove of antelopes to go by, to be shipwrecked sailors on a desert island, where the only food to be had to keep them from starvation was buttercups, and even to eat those buttercups and suffer the after effects rather than spoil the pretending game.

There too was the kind aunt who brought out biscuits and calves'-foot jelly at eleven o'clock from her store-room, which always had so delicious a smell of raisins and soap and spices. Never was there so kind an aunt, and never did anything taste so good as those biscuits and that calves'-foot jelly.

The children stood rather in awe of their grandfather, for he was very strict, and woe betide any small foot that left its mark on the flower-beds of the manse garden. It was whispered that their grandfather made a nightly round and examined each little muddy shoe put out to be cleaned at night, ready to fit it into the track which the evildoer had left on the flower-bed. It was enough to make them very careful where they stepped. It was awe-inspiring, too, to see their grandfather in the pulpit every Sunday, and though they admired his beautiful face and his white hair, there was something rather terrifying about him, and the cold dark room where he sat solemnly writing his sermons was seldom invaded by any of his grandchildren.

But there was something in that dark room which Louis longed with all his heart to possess. On the walls hung some very highly-coloured Indian pictures, just the sort of gorgeous colouring that Louis loved, and he wanted one more than anything else in all the world. At last there came a day when he was sent into the awesome room to repeat a Psalm to his grandfather, and his heart beat high with hope. Perhaps if he said his Psalm very nicely, his grandfather might reward him with a gift of one of those coloured pictures.

> "Thy foot He'll not let slide, nor will
> He slumber that thee keeps"

quavered the little voice, while Louis kept one eye on his grandfather's solemn face, and one on the Indian picture. When the Psalm was finished, his grandfather lifted him on his knee, and kissing him gave him "a kindly little sermon" which so surprised Louis, who had a very loving little heart, that he quite forgot his disappointment about the gaily-coloured pictures he had longed for.

When those sunny summer days came to an end and Louis went back to Heriot Row, he had a companion with him now who made even the grey days cheerful. His cousin Robert Alan Stevenson spent a whole winter with him, and together they lived in a make-believe world of their own. Disagreeable things were turned into delightful plays, and even their meals were interesting. Instead of having to eat up a plateful of uninteresting porridge for breakfast, the magic of make-believe turned it into a foreign land, covered with snow (which was the sugar of course) or an island that

was threatened by the encroaching sea (that was the cream), and the excitement of seeing the dry land disappearing or the snow mountains being cleared was so entrancing that the porridge was eaten up before the magic came to an end. Even cold mutton could be charmed into something quite delicious when Louis called it red venison, and described the mighty hunter who had gone forth and shot down the deer after many desperate adventures. Jelly was always a kind of golden globe of enchantment to him, and he was sure the spoon might at any moment reveal a secret hollow, filled with amber light.

The boys possessed also very grand make-believe kingdoms which kept them very busy with the affairs of the nation. The kingdoms were called Encyclopædia and Nosingtonia, and were both islands, for Louis loved islands then as much as afterwards when "Treasure Island" took the place of Nosingtonia.

But perhaps the greatest joy of all was when Saturday afternoons came round and the boys went down to Leith to look at the ships, always the chief delight of their hearts. Passing down Leith Walk they came to a stationer's shop at the corner, where in the window there stood a tiny toy theatre, and piled about it a heap of playbooks, "A penny plain and twopence coloured."

Happy indeed was the child who had a penny to spend (for of course no self-respecting boy with paint-box at home ever thought of buying a "Twopence coloured"), who could walk into the shop with assurance and ask to see those books. Many a time did Louis stand outside, having no penny to spend, and try to see the outside pictures and to read as much

of the printing as could be seen at such a disadvantage.

It was no use going in unless the penny was forthcoming, for Mr. Smith kept a stern eye on little boys, and seemed to know at a glance whether they were "intending purchasers" or not. Inside the dark little shop which "smelt of Bibles" he stood, and seemed to grudge them the pleasure of even turning over the pages of those thrilling plays.

"I do not believe, child, that you are an intending purchaser at all," he growled one day, sweeping the precious books away when Louis had "swithered" over his choice so long that no wonder dark suspicions were aroused.

It was those little books which opened to Louis the golden world of romance, the doors of which were never closed to him again.

It was not until Louis was eight years old that he began to read. His mother and Cummie had always been ready to read to him, and that, he thought, was the pleasanter way. But quite suddenly he discovered that it was good to be able to read stories to himself, and it was a red-letter day when he first got possession of the *Arabian Nights*.

Long before he could write, he was fond of dictating stories to anyone who would write them for him, and poor patient Cummie would write sheet after sheet of nonsense, all of which she treasured and read to his mother afterwards. Sitting over the fire at night while Louis lay sleeping in his little bed, the mother and nurse whispered together over the cleverness of their boy, and anxiously tried to reassure each other that he was growing stronger, while they built their

castles in the air always for Louis to dwell in as king.

Louis's school-days made but little impression upon him. He was so often kept away by ill-health, and the schools were so often changed, that he never won many laurels there. Whatever he liked to learn he learned with all his heart, and to the rest he gave very little attention whatever. He was not very fond of games, for he was not strong enough to play them well, and it was only when the make-believe magic began that he was in his element. He played football, but had to invent a tale of enchantment which changed the ball into a talisman, and the players into two Arabian nations, before he could enjoy it.

Far more exciting than any football was the business of being a lantern-bearer, that game of games, which he described with his magic pen long afterwards.

Picture Louis, stealing out of the house at North Berwick on a late September evening, his overcoat buttoned up tightly over something that bulged at the waist, his very walk betokening an errand of mystery. Presently, coming over the wind-swept shore, another dark figure is seen, also with a buttoned-up overcoat, and the same kind of bulge at the waist.

"Have you got your lantern?" breathed Louis.

"Yes," comes the answer. All is well. Over the links and away to the shore the mysterious figures wend their way and are joined by others equally mysterious, and one by one they climb into an old boat and crouch together there at the bottom. The wind whistles and shrieks overhead, but down there they are sheltered, and the overcoats are slowly and carefully unbuttoned, and what seemed to be but a bulge is

shown to be a tin lantern burning brightly, which quite accounts for the strong smell of toasting tin which has been hanging in the air about them.

In the dim light of these lanterns the lantern-bearers sit, and wild and exciting is the talk that mingles with the shriek of the wind, while the sky is black overhead, and the sound of the sea is in their ears.

No one can talk as Louis does, he lays a spell upon them all with his make-believe magic, but after all it is not the talk that is so fascinating, but rather the buttoning up of those overcoats over the lighted lanterns, the exquisite joy of knowing that unseen and unsuspected a hidden light is burning brightly there—that was the joy of being a lantern-bearer.

So it was that the make-believe magic kept Louis happy in his childhood's games, and when he grew up to be a man and left the games behind him, the make-believe magic was never left behind, but gave a great happiness to the world as well as to himself.

"Be good and make others happy" was his own particular rule, for he believed that everyone should be as happy as ever they could, and even children should remember that—

> "The world is so full of a number of things,
> I'm sure we should all be as happy as kings."

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Printed by BALLANTYNE, HANSON & Co.
at Paul's Work, Edinburgh

3/14

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